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C O N T E N T S

History of Hard Rock

During its 40 year history, heavy metal has known many names, many styles and many faces. Whether it's been called acid rock, thrash, black metal, arena rock, hardcore, hair metal or just plain hard rock, the form has continually displayed a unique ability to evolve and transform—never fully embracing the commercial mainstream, while continually probing society's soft underbelly with its pulsating riffs, memorable melodies and larger than life performers. Yet despite its well-practiced "outcast" veneer, the metal form has produced artists ranging from AC/DC, Kiss and Judas Priest to Aerosmith, Iron Maiden and Guns N' Roses, each of whom has sold tens-of-millions of albums and created multi-decade legacies filled with enough twists, triumphs and tragedies to fill the scripts of any weekday soap opera.

Born in the late '60s when British artists like Cream, Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath first took the primal beats of traditional American blues and amplified them beyond the point of immediate recognition, heavy metal has long stood as rock and roll's greatest, and most outrageous artistic outlet. In many ways its songs have become the soundtrack for the rock era while its traditional denim-and-leather look has equally influenced Hollywood bad boys and Paris fashion runways. It is a style whose sounds and stars transcend the traditional bounds of contemporary music to impact the lives of millions around the globe.

Loud, bombastic, controversial and theatrical, despite its apparent "limitations", metal has battled to become the single most successful rock and roll form of all-time. Over the last four decades its various artists have sold over 500 million albums around the world. Clearly, heavy metal is a style that generates incredible passions within those who understand both its blatant energies and surprisingly subtle intricacies. It is all this, and more, that we celebrate in Hit Parader's History of Hard Rock, the most comprehensive report if this sort ever presented in a magazine format. They're all here in chronological order... from the first blues-based runs of Zeppelin through the latest costumed craziness of Slipknot. Our History of Hard Rock has it all, jammed into a double-sized package befitting the greatest musical style in and annals of rock and roll. Read... enjoy... and celebrate with us the glory that is heavy metal.

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arely can it be said with true conviction that members of a particular band are each "the best" at what they do. But when those musicians are virtually hand-picked for their role in a supergroup— a move justified by their recognized position as the preeminent rock guitarist, bassist and drummer in the worldthen they truly must be the cream of the crop. Such was the case back in 1966 when quitarist Eric Clapton, bassist Jack Bruce and drummer Ginger Baker combined their considerable forces to form Creamone of the most hallowed and explosive bands of that era. and a unit whose exploits continue to live on, more than 35 years after their demise, That's a fact evidenced by the immediate success of their recent "reunion" disc. Live at Royal Albert Hall.

"I appreciate what Cream accomplished more with each passing day," Bruce said. "At that time, we were all so heady and full of ourselves and the music we were making, that I don't know if we truly appreciated what was going on. We had each enjoyed quite a bit of notoriety prior to forming Cream, so when the band's arrival was announced, it caused quite a stir. I'm incredibly proud that we managed to create music that lived up to the expectations that so

many had for us.'

If truth be known, during their brief but tempestuous time atop the rock world Cream played as vital a role as anyone—including the likes of the immortal Led Zeppelin—in creating the now-time-honored hard rock ethic. Based rigidly on Delta blues formats and styles, Cream took those basic structures and added their own artistic brilliance to the mix. By doing so, they often ended up performing extended jams that utilized the skeletal framework of hallowed blues classics like Robert Johnson's Crossroads and Willie Dixon's Spoonful and amplifying them beyond the point of immediate recognition. For some bands such a formula would have run the risk of becoming bloated and tedious. But in the ever-capable hands of Cream, the style worked to perfection.

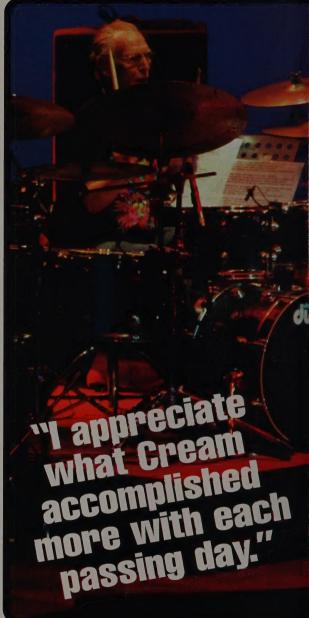
On a series of late '60s discs including Fresh Cream, Disraeli Gears and Wheels of Fire, Cream ostensibly rewrote the rock and roll lexicon. Prior to their arrival, contemporary music was dominated by bands such as the Beatles, Rolling Stones and Who, each of whom utilized well-crafted songs, insightful lyrics and heavily amplified instrumentation to communicate their overtly-popish efforts to the masses. But when Cream came along, they conveniently and intentionally stripped all pop pretense from their approach, replacing it with an almost jazz-fueled experimental flair and a decidedly non-commercial artistic elan. Somewhat ironically, however, despite their strict adherence to "musical integrity", Cream quickly emerged as a commercial giant, not only producing a string of chart-topping discs, but also spawning a series of singles— such as Sunshine of Your Love and White Room—that remain as vital today as when they were first released.

"You've got to understand that it was all highly experimental," Bruce said. "The express point of Cream was to both incorporate the blues more vividly into a rock format and to

try things no other band had... or could."

The "roots" of Cream were already deep by the time these three immensely talented musicians first decided to form their unit in '66. At that time, the English "Blues Revival" scene was flourishing throughout the British Isles, and young rockers, many of whom had spent their last quid purchasing copies of the latest American blues imports, were vying with one another to form bands that were the most "authentic" and "realistic." Out of this fast-growing rock and roll rabble certain bands instantly stood out— among them John Mayall's Bluesbreakers (starring a then-just-out-of-the-Yardbirds Clapton), the Graham Bond Organization (featuring the skin-bashing skills of Baker) and the Manfred Mann

CREAM



Band (fronted by vocalist/bassist Bruce). But when these various groups began to lose direction and purpose, their key members decided it was time to unite their forces... and write a bit of rock and roll history in the process.

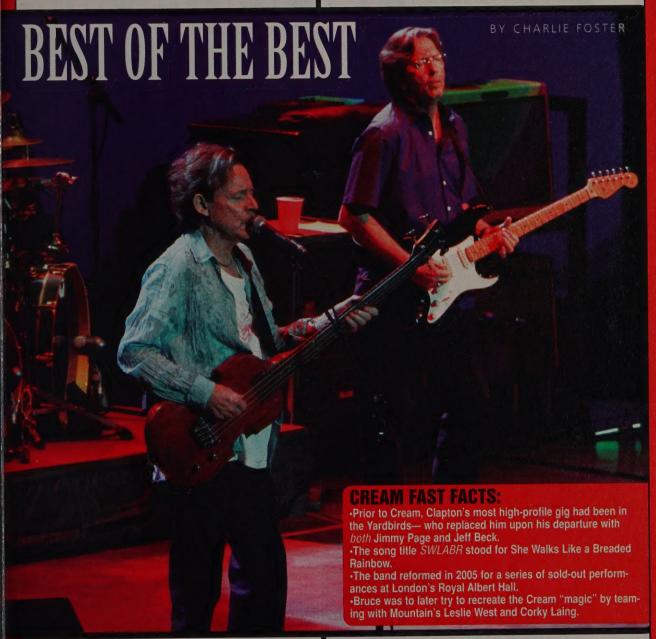
"We had met each other over the years at various gigs and events," Bruce said. "We certainly weren't strangers. But we really didn't know how we would function as a band. We hadn't really done much together before it was announced that we had formed Cream and signed a recording contract. It all happened rather quickly."

Back in the halcyon days of the late '60s, things moved

along at a much faster pace than they do today— at least in terms of a band's recording schedule. It was often expected that a top act would produce two albums a year, and it was contractually *required* that at least one album a year be released... no matter how many months on the road a group may have spent. So despite taking on an overwhelming world tour soon after **Fresh Cream** (featuring *Spoonful* and *I Feel Free*) was released in late 1966, less than a year later

Cream, was released— which instantly went to the top of the charts— and one last tour was held, but by year's end Clapton was off to put together Blind Faith, while Bruce and Baker would struggle to regain the notoriety they had enjoyed with Cream.

Despite their brief time in the spotlight, the role that Cream played in shaping the very structure of the hard rock world should never be overlooked. While the likes of



Cream's pinnacle album **Disraeli Gears** (featuring *Strange Brew, Sunshine of Your Love* and *Tales of Brave Ulysses*) cemented the group's growing reputation as the most talented hard rock band of their time.

Perhaps it was the pressure inherent with maintaining such a hectic touring and recording pace. Or maybe it was merely the stress of continually trying to live up to everyone's expectations, but by 1968, barely two years after they had first come together, visible cracks had begun to appear in Cream's musical armor. By mid-year it was announced that they were calling it a day. A farewell disc, **Goodbye**

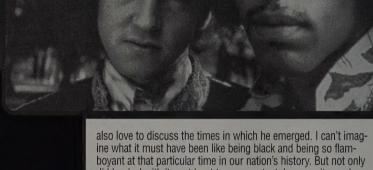
Zeppelin, Purple and Sabbath are more readily credited with providing the form with its foundational elements, the concepts of instrumental virtuosity and blues purity that Cream espoused on album and stage served to inspire future generations—including everyone who ever picked up a guitar and cranked it to "10."

"I've had so many musicians come up to me over the years and tell me that without those Cream albums they might never be doing what they are," Bruce said. "And I must assume that even if they were... they'd be doing it very differently if it wasn't for us. I take great pride in that."

Sainies appealed J'Iha

imi Hendrix was the Electric God. As he stood on stage, bathed in a multicolored spotlight, drawing torturedyet-beautiful sounds out of his white, left-handed Fender Stratocaster, he represented everything that rock and roll could be ... and everything so many in conservative, late 1960s America feared that it had already become. Housed within Hendrix' tortured guitar notes and revolutionary song concepts were vivid visions of war, peace, alien invasions and cosmic confrontations-all housed within a style that was ostensibly an amped-up, blues-from-the-beyond format, Quite simply, no one had ever heard anything like it before... and 37 years after his death, no one has heard anything like it since.

"If there is one musician I would truly loved to have met it would have been Hendrix," said ex-Audioslave guitarist Tom Morello. "I would love to pick his brain not only about how he attained so many of the sounds he did, but I'd



did he deal with it- at least to some extent, because it may have eventually consumed him— he left a legacy that is unmatched.'

It is now clear that among the hallowed names of rock history, perhaps none has stood on a loftier plateau for a longer period of time than that of Hendrix. Though he was in the blinding spotlight of stardom for a little more than three years, and while he died at the amazingly tender age of 27, Hendrix' myriad accomplishments have continued to grow in both stature and importance with the passing years. His incredible instrumental virtuosity, his Jim Dandy on and off-stage demeanor, his "voodoo chile" persona and the fact that he was a black man operating within the confines of a decidedly white man's world, all added up to make

him a truly unique personality in the hallowed annals of rockdom. "I was always more of a Clapton, Page, Richards guy," said Aerosmith's Joe Perry. "But I think that may have been because those guys at least seemed somewhat accessible. If I tried really hard I could at least come close to doing what they were doing. What Hendrix was doing was so far beyond me that it intimidated the crap out of me.'

In many ways it is safe to say that without Hendrix' groundbreaking, precedent-shattering accomplishments much of what would later transpire in the rock world would have been unimaginable. Perhaps only Elvis and the Beatles had more of a lasting impact on the music scene than this colorfully-clad, ever-cool guitar wizard from Seattle. While today's rock scene seems to have to a great extent turned its back on the kind of flash and virtuosity that were Hendrix' primary calling cards, even those born long after his demise continue to site his work as a primary motivation for their first forays into the music scene.

"Hendrix was perhaps the most significant rock performer of all time," said a record label source "It wasn't like his music was ever out of style, but it was only a matter of time before a new generation began to appreciate his brilliance. Jimi was a unique personality, both on stage and off, and it's great that people still

seem to not only remember him but also to revere him."

It probably would be very hard for this surprisingly unassuming rocker to imagine that well into the 21st Century, his ground-breaking work would still be dissected, analyzed and scrutinized by both



trip to their local record store can be a confusing experience—especially when it comes to selecting a few essential Jimi recordings. While there have been over 20 "official" Hendrix album releases over the years—along with dozens of additional "bootlegs" featuring live shows and studio outtakes—amazingly the man only released three studio albums (Are You Experienced, Axis: Bold As Love, and Electric Ladyland) during his brief but meteoric ascent to the top. Subsequent "best of" collections and "in concert" albums have flooded the market in the decades since his death (some of questionable quality), but for a true view of Hendrix' essential musical magic, those Original Three recordings are, quite simply, impossible to beat.

"We've tried to stay true to Hendrix' original ideal," said a source at Hendrix' current label. "We've tried to do some inventive things, We've also released albums which are very important historical documents that have appealed to both long-time Hendrix fans and PORME

and adultes The

a variety of younger fans."

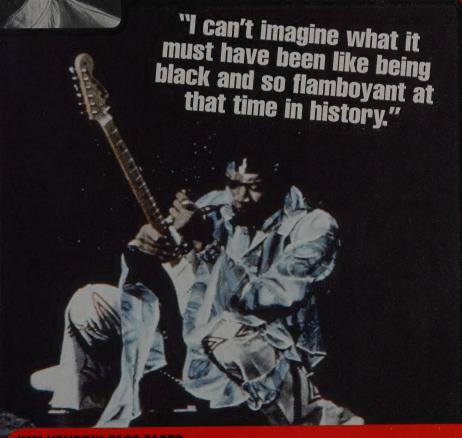
So can we expect this Hendrix juggernaut to continue in the years ahead? Are there still more unreleased recordings hiding in a vault somewhere that may finally see the light of day? As a matter of fact there are, and according to label sources they will eventually emerge in one form or another. Those now in charge of the Hendrix musical legacy are intent on continuing to mine the guitarist's archives and present his music in as tasteful and respectful a manner as possible— something some earlier Hendrix archivists often failed to do.

"There's only one thing you can say about Hendrix," Hammett stated. "He was the very best there ever was and probably ever will be. How many other people can you honestly say that about?"

fans and fellow musicians, all determined to try and unlock the "secret" to his amazing array of guitar sounds. It's safe to say that Jimi Hendrix totally reinvented the rock guitar when he first burst upon the music scene in 1967, a high-stepping, jive-talking black man with a white guitar, who issued a clarion call to a generation. extolling them to arise and be heard. His songs, such as Purple Haze, Voodoo Chile and Foxy Lady remain "classic rock" radio staples, and his influence continues to touch everyone who's ever heard his work.

"Hendrix was it for me," said Metallica guitarist Kirk Hammett. "Every time I think I'm getting good on the guitar, I just go and listen to Hendrix-that puts me in my place in a hurry. He was just amazing. I would pay anything for the chance to have seen him live, but he died long before I even really knew about rock and roll. But maybe every time I play my guitar a little bit of his influence shines through-I certainly hope it does."

For many young fans who are perhaps just beginning to appreciate Hendrix' music, a



JIMI HENDRIX FAST FACTS:

 By the time Hendrix played his legendary set at Woodstock, less than a quarter of the original crowd remained.

•When a left handed guitar was not available, Hendrix would frequently flip over a right handed model and play it "backwards."

Jimi was a United States paratrooper before beginning his rock and roll career.
Before making it on his own, he once toured as the band guitarist for the notorious Little Richard.



basted, culturally ridiculed and commercially ostracized with quite the same degree of intensity as Black Sabbath upon their rock scene arrival in 1970. At a time when Beatlemania was world, and the soft winds of the Summer of Love were still blowing strong, a band with the dire look, sound and style of these four lumbering behemoths from the decidedly un-hip English industrial come as a turd in the punch bowl.

But, the fact of the matter was that qui-Osbourne, bassist Geezer Butler and drummer Bill Ward really didn't give a flying flip about what the rest of the rock and roll world thought of them. Heck, in the substance-induced haze that often characterized their early days, they probably weren't even aware that they were the subject of so much criticism and derision. However, a funny thing hapangry, frustrated kids-most of whom were sick-to-death of the hippie-styled trappings of the era and the fake goodtime vibe that characterized so much of

that time's music-turned Black Sabbath into rock's first "underground" superstars.

Their music was unlike anything anyone had heard before— loud, dark and cumbersome, with ear-blasting riffs, slightly-satanic lyrical imagery and song titles drawn straight from Grade-B Hollywood horror flicks. Nobody knew it at the time, but through Sabbath's initial efforts, the first salvos of true heavy metal thunder had been issued, and those rough-'n-ready sounds were about to start a musical revolution that would literally and figuratively rock the world to its very core.

"We were rather innocent about it all," Iommi said. "We were just four lads from a blue collar, working class environment who had an interest in the occult and horror movies. Originally we had called ourselves Earth, and were content to

play rather conventional music But once Geezer came to us with the name Black Sabbath-which he had picked up from an old Boris Karloff film— everything seemed to just fall into place."

The Sabs went on to rule the '70s metal scene, emitting a foundational heaviness that such contemporaries as Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple could never hope to match. It was a heady ride, with the ever-tempestuous Iommi/Osbourne relationship threatening to break the band asunder at any given moment. Still, throughout the decade Black Sabbath prevailed, cranking out a series of chart-topping albums like Paranoid and Master of Reality that cemented their rep as the heaviest band in the world. Yet, as their fame grew, and the scope of their tours continued to expand, so did the group's internal problems. Throughout the '70s Ozzy's growing dependence

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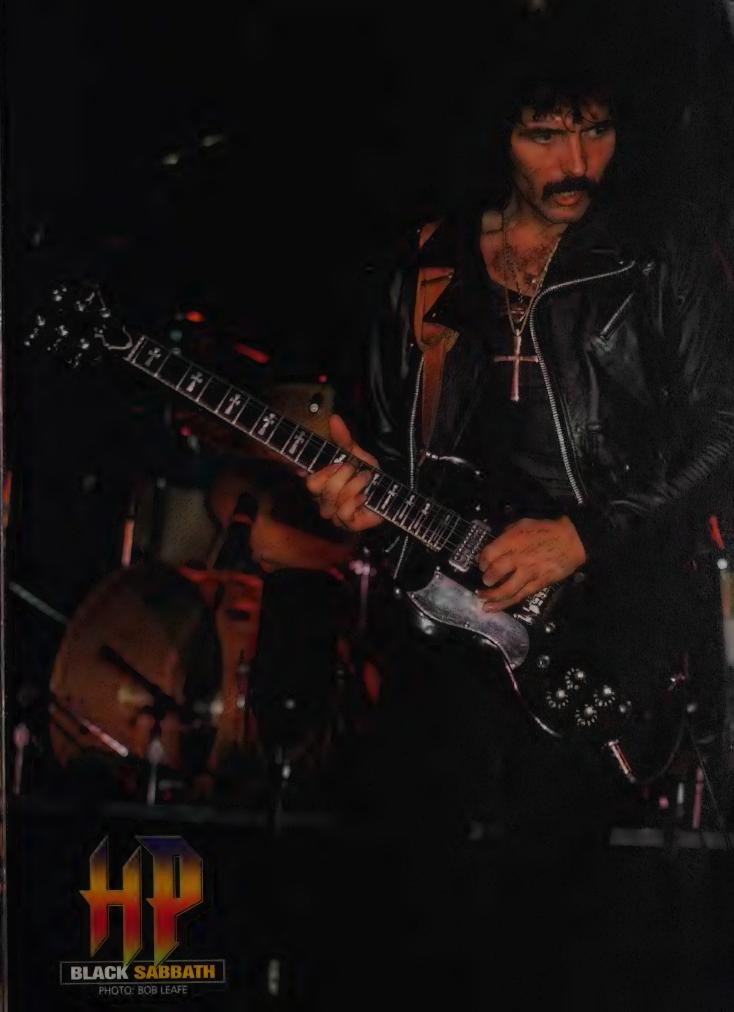
on drugs and alcohol proved to be a major problem, until in 1979— following a disastrous American tour where a young and hungry Van Halen blew them off the stage every night-Osbourne

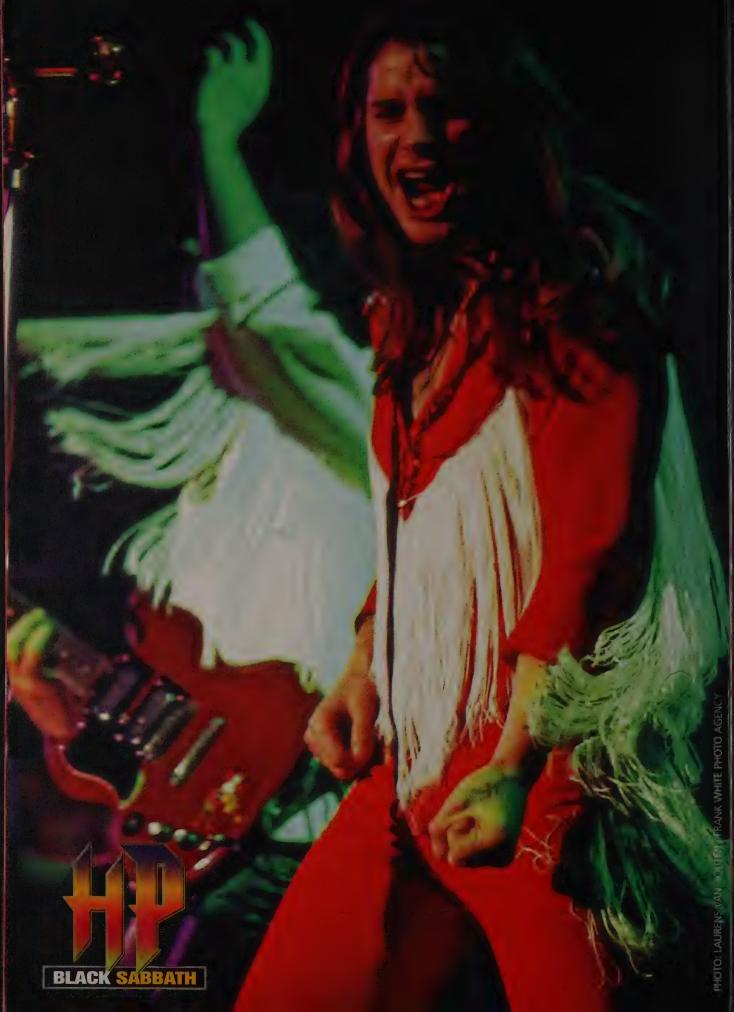
Ozzy Osbourne

was summarily fired by a fed-up lommi.
"I think it was best for Ozzy as well as for the band," a source said. "He couldn't really function at that point, and he was holding the band back. Tony knew what had to be done. and he did it.

With that as the historical backdrop, it was quite understandable that when the original Black Sabbath lineup rather miraculously returned to the rock world in the late '90s, a number of major questions quickly ensued. Did a generation of fans weaned on the angst-filled sounds of Disturbed, Korn and Staind really give a damn about this legendary heavy metal force? Did fans with little sense of metal history, and perhaps even less sense of musical greatness,









"WE WERE JUST FOUR LADS FROM A BLUE COLLAR, WORKING CLASS ENVIRONMENT WHO HAD AN INTEREST IN THE OCCULT AND HORROR MOVIES."

truly understand the importance of these hallowed Princes of Darkness? Could the Slipknot-loving teen-aged masses who comprised a vast majority of the hard rock community actually relate to a bunch of rockers old enough to be their dads,, or granddads? Well, as we all quickly found out, the answer was a resounding YES!

As proven by their remarkable 21st Century success on the four trail— where these legendary metal masters appeared

in front of over two million of their frenzied followers—These unmatched masters of the Power Riff still had what it took to make the metal minions respond with passion. So what if they no longer exuded the devil-may-care attitude that made such quintessential '70s hits as Iron Man and Paranoid foundational blocks in the Metal Hall of Fame? Upon their reuniting

endary metal masters appeared

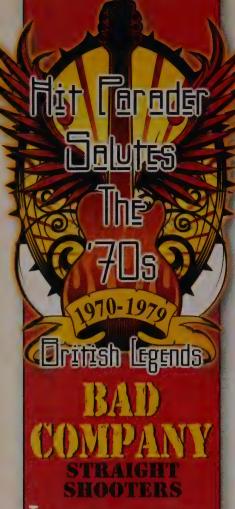
Bill Ward

after nearly a two decade separation, these timetested British veterans had something even more important at their disposal— the smarts, the knowledge, the talent and perhaps significantly, the desire to create the kind of hard rock music that most younger acts could only dream of creating.

"I don't think there is anything that can replace experience," formmi said with a slightly sinister grin. "And we certainly have plenty of that. We ve known each other for more than 30 years, and there are times when we seem to just instantly know what each other is thinking—especially when it comes to music. You can't buy that kind of feeling. It only comes over the course of time."

The ability of Black Sabbath to allow a new generation of fans to taste their slightly-demonic brand of metal came at a particularly significant time in hard rock history—a point where the form was clearly beginning to lose its focus and drive. But the return of Sabbath seemed to inspire a new generation of bands to pick up their guitars and turn their amps on-high, in the process continuing metallic traditions as old as the form itself, lommi, in particular, especially enjoyed this Sabbath re-birth. After years of bickering with Ozzy, and after decades virtually single-handedly keeping the band alive— if not always well—he, more than anyone, had become alpreciative of the myriad opportunities that had rather suddenly come the Sabs' way.

"Certainly five years ago, this would all have been little more than a dream to me," the guitarist said at the time. "I may have always hoped that we would all get together again, but I didn't really know if it could happen. But I guess we are proof that miracles can—and do—happen."



I even there was a band designed to take maximum advantage of the Arena Rock ethic that came to life in the 70s, then Bad Company was it Featuring an array of immensely talented musicians, all of whom had already paid their share of heavy musical dues prior to forming this star-studded unit Bad Co. was a band created expressly with world-wide domination in mind

"None of us were intimidated by the idea of success," said vocalist Paul Rodgers. "We had all tasted acclaim before, and were anxious to do so again within a different context. That's exactly what Bad Company provided to us."

Perhaps the greatest irony involved with the run-away Bad Co. phenomenon— which started virtually from the instant that their debut single. Can't Get Enough, hit the airwaves in 1974—was that each of the musicians involved had to ostensibly "dumbdown" their approach in order to make their new band work to its maximum advantage. Both Rodgers and drummer Simon Kirke had previously been involved with the critically acclaimed but often overlooked blues/rock unit Free, a band that effectively created the musical blueprint that Bad Company was to follow. Guitarist Mick Ralphs had experienced Bright Lights, Big City during his stint in Mott the Hoople, one of the most "hip" bands of the early

14 HIT PARADER

'70s art/rock scene. And bassist Boz
Burrell had cut his teeth in the multifaceted progressive-rock unit King
Crimson, which stood among the most
critically lauded bands of their time. But it
wasn't until these four proven rock and roll
forces decided to merge their fortunes
together that the magic that was Bad

Company sprung to life.

"Bad Company came along at just the right time for Paul and I," Kirke said. "Free had completed what had become a rather difficult run, and we weren't sure what to do next. Once we hooked up with Mick, it all seemed to fall together. He had some songs that were basically ready to go...including Can't Get Enough, and we were all anxious for a fresh start."

With an intimidating manager (Led Zeppelin's Peter Grant) behind them, and an equally powerful record label (Zeppelin's own Swan Song) at their disposal, it was apparent right from the get-go that there would be no stopping Bad Company from attaining all of their lofty goals. While some critics initially railed about the streamlined, somewhat sanitized blues/rock style that served as this unit's musical foundation, fans immediately railied to the strident

chords and emotive vocals that filled each and every Bad Company song. Hit followed hit, with the likes of *Good Lovin' Gone Bad, Feel Like Makin' Love* and *Movin' On* perpetually keeping this British unit at the top of the charts on both sides of the Atlantic.

"At first we had no idea how big things would become," Kirke said. "Even with Can't Get Enough jumping out of the box so well, we were still prepared to undertake things the slow way— opening tours for others until we developed our own following. But within a matter of months we were moving from the 'special guest' slot on tours to the headlining position. It was a wonderful time."

At heart, it was easy to understand Bad Company's appeal. In Rodgers they possessed perhaps the most singularly distinctive voice of his— or any other— rock generation. His throaty, raspy growl could roar like a lion or purr like a kitten as each song dictated, filling even the most mundane band ditty with a soul-wrenching power that drew in the listener like the proverbial moth to flame. In Ralphs they featured a somewhat pedestrian guitarist, but one who seemed to have an unerring knack for song craftsmanship and on-stage showmanship.

"We had all tasted acclaim before, and were anxious to do so again."



PHOTO: LAURENS VAN HOUTEN / FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY



"We had all previously worked within bands where there were problems of one kind or another," Kirke said. "Some of those, as was the case in Free, occurred from the drug use of a member. Others had more to do with personality conflicts. So when we all fell together in a band like Bad Company, where everyone seemed focused only on making the best possible music and making the band as big as pos-

"We had no idea how big things would become."

sible, it was a great relief."

Rather ironically, in light of the "good time" vibe that characterized the band's early days— as well as its member's remembrances— the Golden Age of Bad Company only lasted for four years. While such albums as **Bad Company**, **Straight Shooters** and **Run With the Pack** continually reached the top of the charts, by the time 1977's **Burnin' Sky** emerged, noticeable cracks had begun to appear in the group's previously

impervious rock veneer.
1979's **Desolation Angels**showcased an expansion of
the band's base sound with
strings and synthesizers,
and despite the hit status
of that disc's *Rock 'n Roll Fantasy*, it was clear that
something was wrong
within the band's creative
core. A three-year hiatus
followed, which ended with
the appearance of **Rough Diamonds**, a disc that

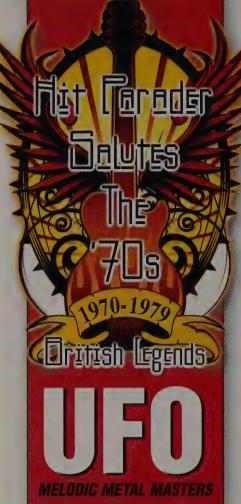
would represent the last time Rodgers would record with the band until 1998. Bad

would rock on throughout the '80s and '90s with a variety of bassists, but it was never quite when the band's original lineup reformed in the late 90s for a series of soldout tours and a few new recording sessions, magic that had characterized the group's initial era had been lost. But the fact is that Bad Company had little to apologize for; the band had withstood the test of time to rank among the most successful, and at times soulful units the hard rock world had ever they created has

ostensibly served as the soundtrack for a generation. That's certainly not a bad epitaph to have

DMPAR!

"Bad Company may be associated with a certain time in rock history, but I think the music was actually timeless," Kirke said. "There was a line in a Free song that went, "We made a stand that will last forever." Hopefully that applies to Bad Company as well."



here was an internal dynamic within UFO during their '70s prime that both powered this multi-national unit to soar ing heights and plummeted them to the depths of internal strife. With a blond German guitarist, Michael Schenker, serving as the centerpiece of this very English melodic metal unit (one featuring the talents of vocalist Phil Mogg, bassist Pete Way drummer Andy Parker and keyboardist Paul Raymond), there was bound to be conflict But few could have predicted the nightly reenactments of World War II that served to drive an artistic, personal and cultural stake through the heart of one of the most talented, endearing and yes, enduring bands produced by that era's Euro-rock scene. But just as that inner-band conflict continually threatened to tear UFO asunder, it also served as the foundational motivation for many of the band's ground-breaking hits songs that in sound, manner and execution still stand among the finest examples of metal craftsmanship ever heard by the ears of mortal man

"Maybe the most important thing is that UFO has survived in one form or another for more than 30 years." Mogg said. "Sure there were problems at times, those have certainly been well documented. But the music survives all that and at the same time, makes anything to do with our personalities rather irrelevant."

Perhaps such a brief synopsis of UFO's inner turmoil too quickly dismisses one of the great "feuds" in rock history. But rather

than dwelling on the often strained relationship that existed between Mogg and Schenker, perhaps we should focus on the beauty of the music they helped create. Before we do, however, perhaps a little historical context is needed. Let's not forget that when UFO first lured Schenker into their band (he was then fronting the Scorpions, who, as we all know, went on to enjoy their own share of fame and fortune), he was a mere 18 years old....and couldn't speak a word of English. His age (which often led to him acting in a rather immature fashion) and his inability to properly communicate led to instant problems. But, oh,

could that dude play guitar!

"We were on tour in Europe, and the Scorpions were our opening act," Mogg recalled. "We had been highly impressed by Michael's playing every night-which in retrospect, may have ignited our own guitarist's decision to split in mid-tour. We hired Michael away from the Scorpions, which didn't please his brother Rudolf very much. It's nice to know that things worked out well for everyone." Schenker's addition to the UFO lineup instantly seemed to transform them into one of the most musically diverse and artistically satisfying bands around. Able to play haunting ballads and convincing wall-shakers with equal aplomb, in many ways UFO were a decade before their time, exploring the kind of pop/metal mastery (as well as the shaky guitarist/vocalist relationship) that powered bands like Van Halen and Dokken in the '80s. On such songs as Rock Bottom, Cherry, Out in The Street and Doctor Doctor, the band's unique dynamic and willingness to let Schenker's virtually untapped brilliance light their musical sojourn—made them one of the most successful bands or their era. And at a time when even the likes of the Mighty Zeppelin often felt the string of criticism for their self-indulgent musical musings, UFO managed to garner near-unanimous press kudos on both sides of the Atlantic.

"Obviously, we were more popular in Europe than in America," Mogg said. "But the media was very kind to us... at least most of the time. They seemed to understand what we were doing, and they were quite supportive of it. It's strange that certain places in America—particularly Chicago—seemed to embrace us, while other places remained quite difficult for us to master. I believe to a great extent the media support—or lack of it—in those places dictated that kind of reaction."

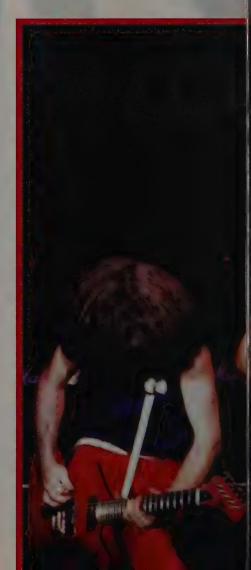
While they may have continually struggled for State-side recognition, and the unpredictable nature of Schnker's personality continued to torture the group's internal chemistry (in 1979 he inexplicably split from the band only days before their biggest American tour was about to begin, only to resurface a month later, acting as if nothing had happened), nothing could seemingly stop UFO from doing what they did best. Even after Schenker finally moved on to start his own band—though he was to return to the UFO fold over the next two decades whenever the mood struck him—UFO continued to rock on, though with both diminishing artistic elan and dropping commercial impact.

"I have been fond of every version of this band," Mogg said. "But I'd be foolish not to admit that to many of our fans the lineup with Michael is our 'classic' lineup. Those songs, that sound, are as much a part of me as my hands or feet. I think we have created a legacy that we can all be justifiably proud of."

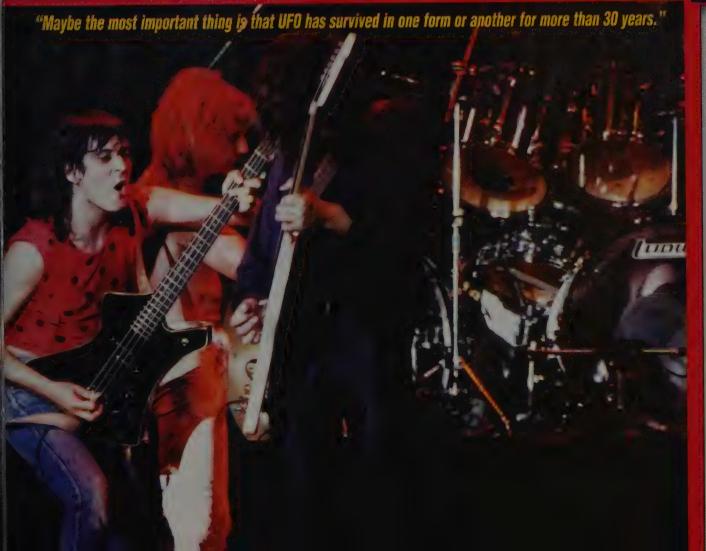
It is perhaps an unfortunate commentary on UFO's lasting impact on the State-side hard rock scene to note that to many reading this, the band's name and music means very little. Their best work has been usurped over the years by bands that followed in their wake— many of whom conveniently "borrowed" the formula of featuring a flashy lead guitarist and a highly accessible hard rock writing style. But, let it be said here and now that at their creative peak, UFO may well have been the best late-'70s metal band in the entire world! Such chart-topping band efforts as 1978's Lights Out and 1979's Strangers In The Night set the standards against which all hard rock groups of that era were measured— as well as laying the groundwork for the seminal metal movement that would soon transpire in the '80s.

"It was very interesting to see and hear so many bands emerge in the '80s who had obviously taken some of our musical approach to heart," Mogg said. "I don't know if we ever received as much credit as we expected for being at the beginning of all that. But we didn't necessarily want that kind of praise. We always knew what we had accomplished...

and so did our fans.'









hen Queen first hit the rock scene with their self-titled debut disc in 1974, nobody knew quite what to make of them. On sure, it was almost instantly apparent that housed within this band's strident yet soaring sound was something new and different... but exactly how new and different was then still incalculable

points-of-reference for the kind of pomp and circumstance that vocalist Freddie Mercury, guitarist Brian May, drummer Roger Taylor and bassist John Deacon brought forth. At least when the likes of Zeppelin first rode over the rock honzon. critics could immediately cajole or cruci-fy them for their bastardized attempts to over-amplify time-tested American blues riffs. But with Queen it was different. Yes, there were some superficial similarities to Zeppelin, where the more bombastic elements of that group's sound provided a foundational element for the Queen attack. But housed within this regal band's style were also strains of classical music, touches of jazz and snatches of ol' tin-pan-alley pop that immediately served to separate them from *anyone* else on the contemporary music front. It was a heady, heavy mix one that set the entire rock world on its ear and that was even before they saw the way Queen looked!

And what a shock to the senses that proved to be! With May's dark, curly locks, pirate-styled shirts and self-made

quitars he certainly stood out from that era's traditional Guitar Gods. Taylor and Deacon held their own on the fashion

front, as well. But they all positively paled next to the satin suited, bare-chested, fingernail painted, sartorially splendid vision of Mercury that confronted fans at each and every stop along Queen's seemingly neverending tour trail. In dramatic contrast to the hippie-cum-minstrel image then presented by Zeppelin's Plant and the fringed leather look that the Who's Daltry

favored at that time. Mercury's image was startling, inventive and slightly unsettling all at the same time. It was, as he later admitted, a look inspired more by Liza Minelli than Mick Jagger. Perhaps the rock world wasn't quite yet ready for such an outlandish dandy... but ready or not, Queen were on their way.

"Freddie was unique from Day One," May said. "From the first time our paths crossed it was easy to see that his influences and inspirations were different from just about everyone else's. Much of that had to do with the fact that he had been born and raised in some very exotic locales- and much had to do with the fact that it was just

Freddie.'

While Mercury may have quickly established himself as the face and spirit of Queen, on such albums as Queen, Queen II, Sheer Heart Attack, A Day at the Races and A Night at the Opera, it became abundantly apparent that it was May's distinctive, multilayered, harmonic guitar tones that provided the band with much of their

artistic backbone. Indeed, the Mercury/May team proved to be an ideal tandem, with each simultaneously serving as both inspiration and foil for the other's creative vision. While they often shared the band's songwriting responsibilities, the majority of Queen's bestknown hits, from Somebody to Love, Killer Queen, Tie Your Mother Down and We Will Rock You to the immortal Bohemian Rhapsody fell primarily under Mercury's creative hand.

"One of the best elements of Queen is that everyone felt free to contribute to the creative process," May said. "But there's no question that Freddie came to the fore when he was writing. The strength of

Brian May: Guitar maestro

> his performances occasionally overshadowed that fact- but not to those who understood this band's inner-workings.

Throughout the '70s Queen's reputation for creating expansive, uniquely expressive progrock opuses continued to grow-especially in Europe, where they eventually sold more

albums than any group other than the Beatles. America was a little slower to catch on, but once they did, they escalated Queen to the status of arena-packing headliners from coast to coast. While State-side critics occasionally found Mercury's campy, overtly theatrical style a little hard to swallow, few could find fault with the band's pioneering studio work or

spirited stage presentations.

The Queen juggernaut continued to roar throughout the '80s and well into the '90s with such discs as **Hot Space**, **The Works** and **Innuendo** presenting a more sedate but still occasionally challenging band. Yet it slowly became clear to the band's followers that the unit's most distinctive and influential work revolved around their landmark '70s efforts. And as Mercury's health began to fail (he was to succumb to an AIDS-related illness in 1993), Queen's role as hard rock innovators began to diminish... though their influence on a younger generation of bands never did.

"It's so rewarding to have so many of today's bands site our work as an inspiration," May said. "That's really all any group

can ask.

Considering how closely their look, sound and image was associated with Mercury, it was nothing short of shocking when in 2005 Queen announced that they'd again hit the tour trail... this time with former Free/Bad Company frontman Paul Rodgers as vocalist. The mere notion of Rodgers joining forces with Queen was enough to enrage just as many rock and roll "purists" as it has pleased. On one side, you had longtime Queen fans, many of whom were aghast at the thought of anyone, anywhere, anyhow attempting to step into the sainted shoes of the late, great Mercury. On the other, you had the die-hard fans of Rodgers, most of whom turned up their noses at the image of the "macho" vocalist attempting to sing some of Queen's positively prissy pop/metal anthems. Of course, in the middle of all this commotion were millions of rock fans around the world who were thrilled to once again have May and Taylor working under the legendary Queen banner

"Queen has always been so near and dear to my heart," May said. "But the concept of doing these songs as Queen without Freddie just didn't seem right for a very long time. We considered a variety of options over the years, but none of them sat properly with

us. But once we met Paul— someone whom I've obviously admired for a very long time— things just seemed to click. He's about as different from Freddie as you can get in his stage and singing style. But he brings something to the music that is magical. The songs take on an entirely different feel, and that's what we wanted. We weren't looking for someone to mimic Freddie."

From the first time our paths crossed it was easy to see that and inspirations were different from just Freddie Mark 1998 "He was unique from Day

PHOTO: FRANK WHITE



heights it may have reached, in the eyes of many-including its key members- Rainbow was always considered the "other" band. It held that distinction for founder/guitarist Ritchie Blackmore, who used Rainbow's expansive hard rock format as an occasional escape from his far-more-famous musical home within Deep Purple. And it was also the "other" band for the group's original vocalist Ronnie James Dio, who despite the wide-spread notoriety his work with Rainbow would generate during that band's mid-70s heyday, would go on to bigger, though not necessarily better things with both Black Sabbath and Dio.

But despite its status as a less-thanheadline attraction, Rainbow (named, according to legend, after the famed Sunset Strip rock club) certainly held a special appeal within the hearts and minds of its legion of loyal followers. After all, here was a group of ever-changing (except, of course, for the Man In Black, himself), top-flight musicians, all determined to mine commercial gold without sacrificing one lota their artistic integrity. It was a delicate, and at times cumbersome, balancing act. But when it worked-which was often-it produced some of the most stirring, guitar-driven rock to be experienced in an era when the likes of Zeppelin, Sabbath and Priest still roamed free

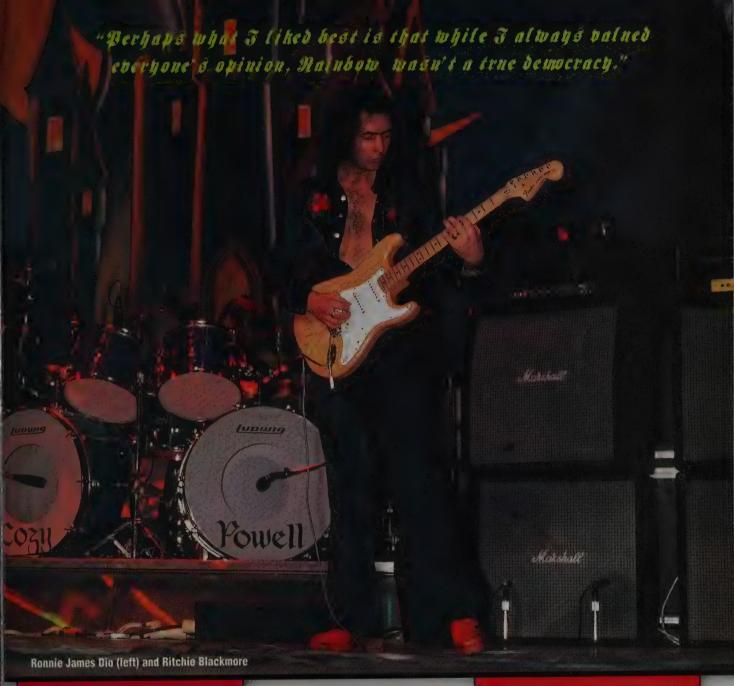
"I always found Rainbow to be a very satisfying outlet for my music," Blackmore stated a few years ago. "Perhaps what I liked best is that while I always valued everyone's opinion, it wasn't a true democracy. I had control of the final decisions, which I must admit I liked quite a bit."

In sharp contrast to his often tumultuous relationships within Deep Purple (to whom he would return in 1984, before leaving again in 1993 to temporarily re-ignite Rainbow's musical flame) whatever Blackmore said was instant "law" in the land of Rainbow. There was no Jon Lord or Roger Glover to reign him in, nor an Ian Gillan to enrage him. And while he grew to respect and admire Dio's sharp mind and powerful voice, on such albums as Rainbow Rising and Long Live Rock & Roll, it was clear to the variety of musicians who would eventually pass through the Rainbow fold (eventually including, somewhat ironically, the likes of Lord and Glove—both then on "hiatus" from the Purple People) there were only two ways to operate within the bounds of Rainbow- Blackmore's way... or the highway.

"Working with Ritchie was always something of a challenge," Glover stated. "It was a bit different in Rainbow than in Purple because both Jon and I knew what we were stepping into there... which was fine with us. I was able to produce the band, which was very interesting. And the music was always first-rate."

With his penchant for blending minstrelinspired melodies with snippets of classical
music and full-throttle metal riffs, Blackmore's
aspirations for Rainbow continually made
them stand out from the hard rock crowd. The
band may have lacked a degree of the Larger
Than Life panache that helped continually propel Purple to the top of the charts, but whether
it was on such rough-'n'ready riff rockers as
Man On A Silver Mountain and Starstruck or
more plaintive tare such as the band's inventive take on the Yardbirds' Still I'm Sad, they
played hard rock with a degree of style, substance and intelligence too rarely heard...





"When I play something, I want it to present involved and the audience that's listening. Blackmore said. "That's why I found it difficult to play some of our bigger hits like Since You've Been Gone, on stage. I know some fans

Of course, dealing with the mercurial involved. Unquestionably, his demanding behavior was the key reason that nearly two dozen different musicians (including four vocalists; Dio, Graham Bonnet, Joe Lynn Turner and Doogie White) passed through the band's door at one time or another during Rainbow's two separate incarnations. But no one who ever stepped through the group's portal ever expected the work to be easy or undemanding on either their talent or their soul. And Blackmore seemed to derive particular pleasure from pushing his troops to the edge, time after time.

"Ritchie has a very strange sense of humor at times," Glover said. "He will challenge those around him until they challenge him back. It's almost a test of wills. Those that pass that test continue on, while those that don't tend to fall

by the way-side rather quickly."

By now it's quite obvious that despite the stellar cast of musicians that often surrounded him (including at different times, the likes of drummer Cozy Powell, bassist Bob Daisley and keyboardist Don Airey) the core of Rainbow was, is and will always be the inimitable Blackmore. His moody guitar stylings and blues-laced lead runs filled every song in the band's catalog with a "must-listen" sense of purpose that often belied their somewhat mundane lyrical attitude. Throughout his stint with Rainbow, he added to the legacy he had already begun to build with Deep Purple—that of a true six-string maestro. Indeed, Blackmore always stood head-and-shoulders above the vast

majority of his quitar playing brethren... and stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the most starstudded instrumentalists of that rock era.

have been wilder. Clapton may have been cooler and Page may have been more clever. But there was just always something about Blackmore's playing that made him special-a perpetually on-the cutting-edge style, a schizophrenic frailty to his sound, that always kept the listener wondering where he was going to go next. Was he going to soar to stratospheric heights upon the concert stage, or throw one of his renowned hissy-fits and storm off after only a song or two? That, in a nut-shell, may have been the gist of Rainbow's appeal.

"I don't try to analyze my playing, Blackmore said, "To me, it's just rock and roll, There are certainly blues elements in there, but when you start dissecting what you're doing you run the risk of losing what makes it special.



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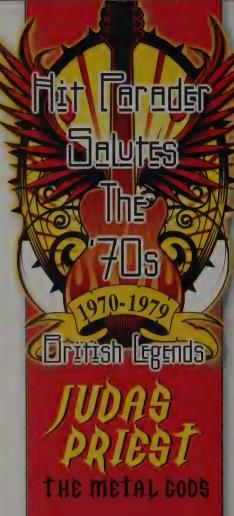


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t's a widely-held belief that Judas Priest have rarely received their due credit as heavy metal pioneers and innovators. Hailing from the same home town as Black Sabbath (Birmingham, England), but arriving on the rock scene in 1975, some half-a-decade behind their metallic forebearers, always cast them in the light of striving younger brothers to many followers of metal machinations. In addition, their dependency on outlandish stage props-including 30 foothigh walls of amplifiers - always provided them with a certain Spinal Tappish "teel"... one further amplified by their affinity for wearing black leather stage outfits and riding customized Harley motorcycles. But, the fact is that such happenstances should really have little relevancy on dictating the true impact that the Priest Beast has had on establishing the musical and cultural parameters of this thing called heavy metal.

In fact, in any number of ways, Judas Priest has epitomized the metal form as no band has done before-and as no band has done since. With their penchant for creating wall-shaking album showcases in addition to their unmatched theatrical stage flair, from their inception in the mid- '70s, these British Bashers have proudly stood their ground as the ultimate metal machine. Unlike their rock predecessors, they were a "pure" metal band, uninterested

in the occasional foray into acoustic tenderness or hippie-styled ideals. They never answered to such titles as "hard rock" or 'psychedelic." To gain Priest's undivided

attention, you needed to feed at the same metallic trough that they called home. "Before Priest there were certainly metal bands, but I think we took the purity of metal ideals to the next level," said vocalist Rob Halford. "We didn't have expansive artistic aspirations... we just wanted to be the best

metal band on earth."

Quite simply, from the very beginning, Priest lived, ate and drank the metal lifestyle, and exuded that metallic credo back to their millions of headbanging fans around the globe. In Halford, these megawatt masters possessed a flamboyant singer with a four octave range who showed no fear of using his explosive voice to shatter ear drums and artistic principles with equal aplomb. In guitarists K.K. Downing and Glenn Tipton, Priest unleashed a double lead guitar attack the likes of which the rock world had never before experienced. Exchanging fleet-fingered riffs as well as the center stage spotlight.

the paired axe aces provided the band's sound with a structural foundation and musical flair that served to provide Priest with their quintes-

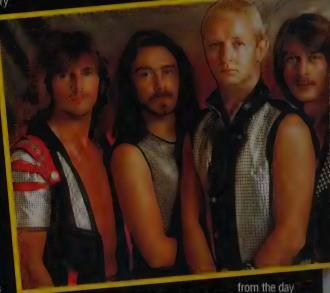
sential metallic element.

Today it may be hard to believe that when Glenn and I started playing dual lead guitars it was rather revolutionary," Downing said. "No one else was doing that at that time."

When Judas Priest hit the top of the charts in the early '80s, with the release of their first platinum album, Screaming For Vengeance, it represented the culmination of a long, uphill battle for recognition and credibility. Prior to their break-through success, Priest had represented almost a caricature of all that had proceeded them. Lacking the multi-faceted skills of Led Zeppelin, the quasi-Satanic overtones of Black Sabbath or the improvisational flair of Deep Purple, Priest was a no-holds-barred rock juggernaut— a band that knew only two speeds, loud and fast or louder and faster. There was little subtlety to offset the group's heavy-handed approach, and while the band's imaginative song structures would venture into previously uncharted metal terrain over the ensuing years, at heart Priest always remained true to the basic metal elements - hammering guitars, screamed vocals and a live-for-today lyrical attitude.

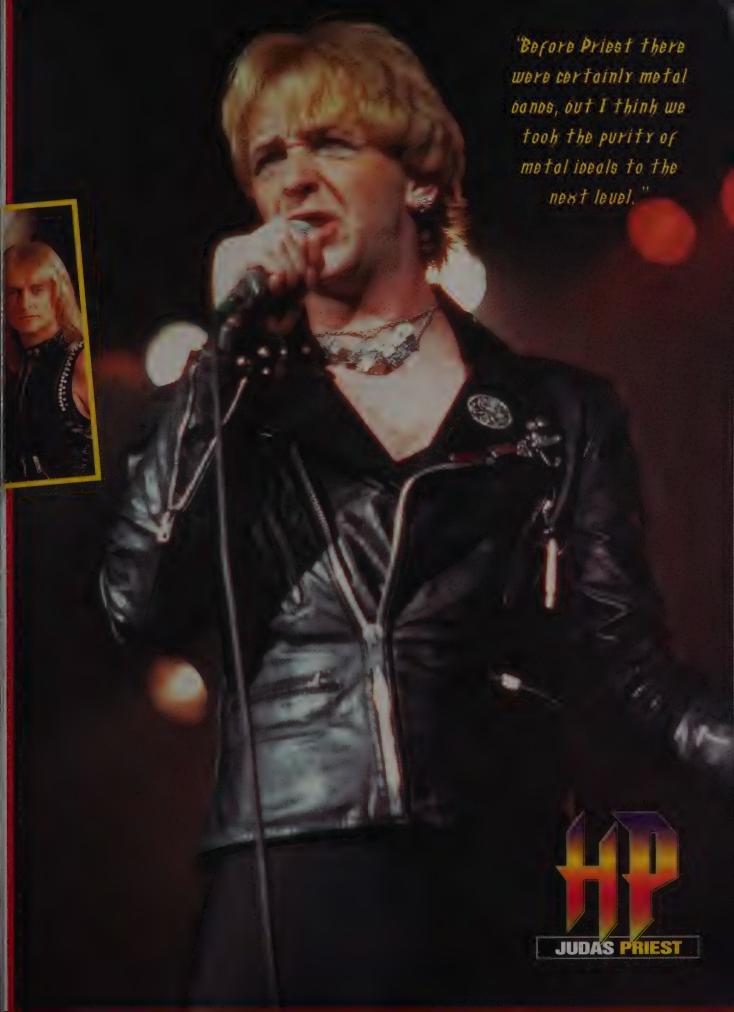
"Judas Priest's goal was always to deliver a special style of heavy metal music," Tipton said. "But the trick was to deliver it with a style that was totally our own. From the moment we came out in the late '70s, people were trying to compare us to Zeppelin, Sabbath or whoever else happened to be around at the moment. There may have been elements of what those other bands did that had influenced us-Sabbath, after all, had come from our home town- but we never tried to be like them. Our goal was to create the purest form of metal music, and I believe we definitely succeeded."

While they were never critical favorites, with many media scribes falsely believing Priest to be little more than a mindless riff factory,



their debut disc, Sad Wings Of Destiny, was released it was evident that this was one band willing to take as many musical chances as necessary in order to succeed. Mixing almost operatic drama with their traditional guitar overload, on succeeding discs such as British Steel, Defenders Of The Faith and Hell Bent For Leather. Priest set themselves up as the true defenders of the metal faith, one of the few bands willing to state their no-holdsbarred allegiance to the metal cause, and one quite capable of backing up that allegiance through the sheer power of their music. At times it even seemed as if they enjoyed scoffing at their detractors. When the leather-clad Halford would burst through the band's exploding wall of amps atop his gleaming Harley it was high camp, high drama and high energy all rolled into one overwhelming rock and roll package. Priest was an all-out assault on the eyes, ears and sensibilities of

all who dared attend one of their shows.
"It was never a question of whether anything was 'too much'," Downing explained.
"It was more of a question of 'could it be done?" We were never concerned about taking a great deal of the money we made and pouring it right back into the band, getting the best and biggest light show we could and making sure that each stage show was a fullscale production that would overwhelm everyone who witnessed it. Coming up with some of those ideas for the stage show almost took as much time as preparing material for a new album.





t seems rather trite to say that the '70s were a fascinating time in rock history 🛓 Indeed, that decade may well represent the single greatest flowering of creative musical genius the world has ever pie rock posturing squarely in the rear view mirror, and before the predictability of "corporate rock" began to rob the medium of its inherent vitality, there was a brief shining period when the rock rock operas structural guitar-bass drum elements were "frankenstined" into progressive-rock masterworks. It was a heady time for all involved

Some of this fast-evolving process could be directly attributed to the mental and moral attitudes of the time— a penod when free speech, free sex and free thinking seemed to be at the apex of their cultural appeal. Some of this musical growth reflected a need for a mind-bending alternative to the Vietnam-derived verge of tearing apart democracy at its very core. And some of it was directly inspired by a generation of rockers who finally felt able to fully express their creativity through the music they played Robin Trower was a product of this

amazing era-a musician who seemed to innately understand this new-found artistic and cultural freedom. And this lanky, long haired Englishman possessed just the kind of musical imagination and instrumental elan to turn the hopes, fears and dreams of his fan base into one of the signature sounds of his

generation.

"I always believed that music needed to come from the heart and soul," Trower said. By the time I began my solo career, threads of overt attempts at commercialism were already creeping into rock and roll. I tried to rebel against that in some ways... while still making music that a large audience could enjoy."

Apparently Trower succeeded on accomplishing a number of his artistic ambitions, because he soon emerged as one of the most successful and respected musicians of his time. Drawing heavily on the still-vibrant aura of Jimi Hendrix, on a series of mid-'70s discs such as Twice Removed From Yesterday, Bridge of Sighs, For Earth Below and Long Misty Days, Trower was able to bridge the gap between prog-rock and hard rock with a sound that was simultaneously sinuous, ethereal and ambient. At the same time, while he seemed to be content with exploring the musical stratosphere with his mind-expanding guitar excursions, he managed to keep one foot firmly planted in the blues, a fact evidenced by his guitar textures, and the vocal approach used by original band frontman James Dewar. It was a formula that worked beautifully, producing a string of gold and platinum selling albums that kept him busy on the road for months at a time.

"I was fortunate that when our first album came out in 1974, it just seemed to strike the right nerve with a number of people. It was very rewarding for me to present something that I believed in so strongly, and have a wide audience accept it and rally behind it.

Prior to branching off on his own in 1973, Trower had cut his primary rock and roll teeth in the late '60s and early '70s with the influential English progressive-rock band Procul Harum. But as many fans reading this may recall, that was a band often dominated more by moody keyboard passages (think Whiter Shade of Pale) than by guitar-driven power. So it wasn't until this Essex-born Stratocaster master stepped forward and launched a solo career that his true instrumental dexterity began to emerge in all its six-string glory. While constant comparisons to Hendrix began to quickly weigh heavily on his creative soul, the fact was that Trower seemed to draw inspiration from the fallen guitar master rather than merely "channeling" elements of his style.

"At that time, if you played a Stratocaster, the comparisons were rather inevitable," Trower said. "It was something that at first pleased me, then became something I more-or-less tolerated. Hendrix was an influence on every guitarist of that era, and you needed to draw upon it and absorb it as best you could. I always felt quite confident in my ability to create something totally new and unique.

Due to the "spacey" vibe of his material, and his ability— and willingness— to transform

such song as Too Rolling Stoned, Daydream and Althen into extended in-concert "monsters", at the peak of his artistic and commer media detractors as supporters. That ratio only seemed to increase throughout the decade as he moved from show opener, to theater head liner to eventual stadium star attraction. In part, such a mixed response is what compelled him to begin expanding his sound on 1977's In City Dreams, a disc that featured notable jazz flavorings and a funkier guitar sound. That partern of overt experimentation continued on 1978's Caravan to Midnight, a disc that in many way symbolized the end of the first era ill

"I felt I had proven myself to a great extent by that time," he said. "I didn't want to run the risk of repeating ideas or failing to evolve. I felt it was important to continually test myself and test the music I was making.

More musical eras would follow for with former Cream bassist Jack Bruce, and a series of wide-ranging solo efforts that would carry him through the next 25 years. As recent ly as 2006 he released a live album, Living Out

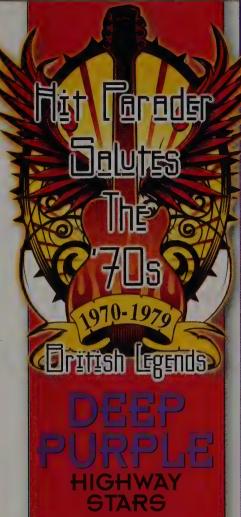
career, threads commercialism were already creeping

of Time, which chronicled many of his caree: highlights. But while he may still be an active force on the music scene, there's no question that Trower's true Moment In The Sun sioned, string-bending, mind-warping guitar excursions turned on a generation seeking just that kind of musical outlet. For that alone Robin Trower will forever stand in the pantheon

of true hard rock guitar gods

Trower's role in shaping the sound and atti-tude of the '70s is generally overlooked," said a music industry insider, "Maybe It's because of the Hendrix association or the simple fact that a lot of the more 'out there' rock of that era hasn't aged particularly well. He's one of doesn't receive the kind of attention and respect it deserves





The year was 1974, shortly after their album Machine Head had catapulted them to the pinnacle of the hard rock world. Deep Purple was on tour, and the energy and anticipation was palpable for the crowd that had gathered backstage to stand in the presence of these budding Rock Gods.

It was a classic scene. The backstage door was sealed tight. A beefy security guard stood firmly in front of the portal with an intimidating scowl on his face. From the other side of the locked sanctuary sweet guitar sounds were emanating, cutting through the dank arena atmosphere like the proverbial hot knife through butter. "He's in there," a record label executive said in hushed tones of maestro behind the guarded entrance. Just then, as if on cue, a flurry of trademarked notes could be heard-then silence. Minutes passed. The drama built. Finally the door burst open and the thin, black-clad figure of Ritchie Blackmore emerged, his snow-white Stratocaster in hand. He dismissively and unsmilingly passed by the entourage that had gathered near Deep Purple's dressing area and joined his bandmates for a pre-concert meeting in an adjoining room. As Blackmore walked by, all eyes lit up around him. In the music biz, they call it Star Quality. Some guys have it- most don't.

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Blackmore has always had it in spades.
That's the way it was for Deep Purple throughout most of their historic 40 year career. The band centered around the tempestuous, talented and totally unpredictable whims of the mercurial Mr. Blackmore while his bandmates— most often keyboardist Jon Lord, vocalist lan Gillan, drummer lan Paice and bassist Roger Glover— lived life in the shadow of his presence. Even when Blackmore departed the Purple scene— as he did both in the mid-'70s to form Rainbow, and then again in the garly-'90s— his influence remained per-

vasive. It's simply impossible to hear any of the band's classic tunes— Smoke On The Water, Space Truckin', My Woman From Tokyo— without thinking of the Man In Black

Indeed, for many followers of the hard rock form, the music of Deep Purple has formed a veritable soundtrack for their lives. But to true fans, it is the band's history that is as compelling as this unit's musical production. During their lengthy existence this legendary British band has encountered more ups and downs than a Coney Island roller coaster, yet they've managed to battle back every time to



continually confound those who forecast their demise. Throughout their career, the band has created a series of unforgettable albums, including such '70s staples as In Rock, Made In Japan and Fireball, all of which served to influence succeeding generations of rock acts as few other recordings have done. And whether it's been with Blackmore, or without, Deep Purple has not only survived, they've prospered.

"Our situation with Ritchie has always been an unpredictable one," Glover said. "He is a personality that is quite different, and at times

somewhat hard to understand.

Somewhat strangely, despite selling more than 60 million albums world-wide during their historic four-decade run at the top of the rock pile, and despite writing and recording some of the best-known songs in metal history, Deep Purple too often run the risk of being cast aside in favor of more "hallowed" bands. Okay, they may never have possessed the quasi-mystical aura of Zeppelin or the slightly satanic overtones so effectively employed by Sabbath But what these immensely talented British rockers always had were more smarts, style and sense than just about anyone else around.

rockers always had were more smarts, style and sense than just about anyone else around. Oh sure, they went through more members than any other band you can think of (at best count five vocalists, four guitarists, three bassists, two keyboard players and a partridge in a pear tree), but somehow, whether it was their so-called Mk. I, Mk. II, Mk. III or Mk. IV lineups, they still managed to sell plenty of albums and pack auditoriums around the globe thanks to the inherent charms of their classically-tinged hard rock attack.

"We have had quite a history," Glover said with a smile. "But no matter who has been in the band at any given time— or who hasn't—

"You'd never find Ritchie and Gillan together they don't get along at all."

we've been able to maintain a level of consistency that has been very satisfying. We're still coming up with ideas the excite us... and thankfully they seem to excite the fans as well."

There's no doubt that despite whatever this unit may still accomplish (and make no mistake about it, they're still out there somewhere on the road slogging away even as you read this), their most significant contributions to the heavy metal lexicon— and their most significant internal battles— happened decades ago. Indeed, this is a band whose inner feuds have



been as much the part of their history as their music. Fact is, Gillan's in-again, out-again relationship with the band has formed as much of a benchmark of Purple's creative and commercial peaks as Blackmore's own predilections. During Gillan's first tenure with the group in the early '70s, the lineup produced most of their classic albums. But following a few disappointing discs, the long-haired frontman split—to be replaced by a then-unknown David Coverdale. While Coverdale's efforts on albums such as 1976's **Burn** were noteworthy, Purple never attained the stellar heights they enjoyed with Gillan, and by 1978, Purple had disbanded.

But then, in 1984—after the group members had played together in various incarnations of Whitesnake and Rainbow— Deep Purple's "classic" lineup reformed for the comeback album **Perfect Strangers**, which proved to be one of the band's most inspired and successful efforts. However, a few years later, Gillan again felt the need to roam, and while Purple continued on, the band's hard rockin' engine had apparently run out of steam. As almost always seems to be the case with Purple, though, all roads eventually lead back to the band, and by

the early-'90s Gillan was back aboard... only to see Blackmore leave a short time later.

"Roger and I are very close," Lord said. "So we often hung out together. Ritchie, on the other hand, always lended to keep very much to himself. And you'd never find Ritchie and Gillan together—they don't get along at all."

Despite all of their internal bickering, however, once they hit stage during their heyday, any private squabbles appeared to be forgotten. At the peak of their mid-70s power—when the Purple People stood proudly as the Kings of the Hard Rock World—when the house lights went down and the stage lights went up, it was near impossible to find a more cohesive, talented and entertaining band than Deep Purple. And, as they tour the world for the zillionth time, they seem content in knowing that their place in the rock pantheon is very much secure. Nothing it seems can remove the sheen from what this legendary outfit has accomplished; they are still the Highway Stars.

"If we didn't still feel relevant, and know that we could still do it, we wouldn't be out there." Lord said. "We enjoy it, and we enjoy knowing that we're still capable of playing up to both the fans' expectations and our own."



s thand as it may be to believe, when Led Zeppelin released their self-titled debut alour in the winter of 1968, many in the music press absolutely hated it. Great expectations had been held for this new creation put together former Yardbirds guitarist aimmy Page, but when Led Zeppelin emerged, it was labeled as everything from "denivative" to "bombastic" to "arrogant" truth it was all that and more. What Page vocalist Robert Plant, drummer, John (Bonzo) Bonham and blasset John Pag. Jones had managed to do was the rock and roll equivalent of reventing the whold. They had taken musical styles attitudes and appenances as of las music is effort to reserve those and appenances.

terred those ancient formulas inside out.

By taking old bloes liows by greats like William.

Exon and Robert Johnson, adding the rown distinctly -European artistic flavorings and men simply amplifying the whole melange beyond the point of immediate recognition. Zeopelin had created an entirely ammunication. The whole as "unimaginalized critics had labeled as "unimaginalize" quickly proved to be just the opposite; it was she perfect musical style with which to herald rock new agail was loud, it was brash, it was the opiate of the masses. Perhaps more than anything else, it was Led Zeopelin.

I remember the first time we all yet together. Jones stated. We met in an old London rehearsal room and we had quite a bit of our gear set up in these I knew Jimmy from some of our session work most notable with Donoven I had me.

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Robert and Bonzo briefly before that. So these four relative strangers got together one evening, plugged in their instruments and started to jam. I remember Jimmy saying to me to 'just play a blues beat'. The song we went into was an old Yardbirds number, *Train Kept A'Rolling,* and I remember the whole room just exploding with sound. You couldn't wipe the

smiles off our faces for a week." From their tumultuous early days, it didn't take Zeppelin long to establish themselves as the preeminent rock and roll band on the planet. Back in the late '60s it took a little longer for a band to develop a following; after all, MTV was still a dozen years from becoming a reality and even the then-infant FM radio format was somewhat resistant to play what it viewed as overly raucous music. The only way a band could get heard was the "old fashioned" way"— by going directly to the people on never-ending world tours. Such was the path that Zeppelin took, opening shows for anyone brave enough to have them on their tour, including such bands as Iron Butterfly and Country Joe and the Fish. But it didn't take Zep long to blossom from "support act" status to headliners, and by the time their second disc, Led Zeppelin II, was released in late 69, the world was already their oyster.

"Things moved incredibly smoothly for us," Page recalled. "We had a manager, Peter Grant, who was able to make things happen. And it was our belief that once we had the chance to play in front of an audience we could win them over. About the only problem we had in the early days was when the Countess Von Zeppelin saw the cover of our first album and almost made us change our name. But by the time the second album came out, I think we all sensed that nothing could stop us."

No one had ever heard anything like Led Zeppelin's late '60s albums. In an age when loosely structured 20-minute jams were standard operating procedure, Zeppelin's hard-hitting bursts of pure rock energy were like a call-to-arms for a generation. Filled with lusty tales of love and conquest, and featuring the most intense instrumental attack ever heard. such early Zeppelin masterworks as Communication Breakdown, Whole Lotta Love and Good Times, Bad Times. were revolutionary in both concept and design. Perhaps only the Beatles, working in a radically different musical format, had as big an impact on their chosen style of rock as Zeppelin had on theirs. By the time their second album finished its meteoric path to the top of the charts, Zeppelin found themselves to be the hottest act in the world—the largest grossing

"We stayed on the road almost continually when the first two albums came out," Plant said. "I think we had completed five complete American tours by the end of

concert attraction in rock history

1969! In retrospect it's amazing that we even survived that ordeal. But the fact is that we loved every second of it."

Indeed they did, and as they spent time on the road, Zeppelin was establishing precedents that *every* future rock act would attempt to emulate. Their dealings with groupies, their hotel-destroying exploits and the dabbling in all manner of bizarre substances quickly became the stuff of legend. The tales have been passed down from generation to generation with code words like "mud shark" or "plaster caster" gaining instant grins of recognition from those in-the-know. It was a lascivious lifestyle in a era before AIDS turned such activities into human games of Russian roulette. As Plant recalls, in their heyday, life was a never-ending party for Led Zeppelin that only ended when they prepared to go on stage each night.

"We were young, and we were healthy, and all manner of temptation was being placed at our feet," he said. "There's was never even a thought of resistance. It was all part of the world we were totally caught up within."

Following the chaos created by their constant recording and touring schedules during their first two years, the band took a short vacation before recording their historic next album, **Led Zeppelin III**. It was the disc that began showing the band's growth, the evolutionary steps that would soon turn Zep's calling card from

that of The Kings Of Robert Plant

Bombast to the masters of all musical forms. For those who had come to expect the three-chord riffs that characterized those initial recordings, the more cerebral, controlled approach used on songs like Gallows Pole and That's The Way was something of a shock. But when criticism came their way, expressing "concern" that Zeppelin had grown soft. Page could only giggle at the notion.

We had time to think about what we were doing for the third album," he said. "We really didn't have that luxury before. We wanted to expand and see what we could do. It wasn't a conscious decision on our part, it was just a natu-

ral development."

Despite III's differing approach, the Zeppelin juggernaut continued on unabated. Their tours continued to gross more and more money, and their albums became instant best sellers. It was as if the band could do no wrong. But

the pressures of competing with himself were beginning to get to Page. Always a brilliant businessman as well as a rock historian, the dark haired guitarist realized that he had been handed a unique opportunity to make a musical statement for the ages. While on the road in Japan he set about creating a song that would serve as his crowning musical creation, the song that Led Zeppelin would be remember for through the ages. When Zeppelin finally reentered the studio to record their next disc, the auixotic untitled album that has come to be known as Zeppelin IV, he felt ready to lay down that song. At first it was little more than a series of disjointed musical movements with

instruments. After weeks of work it became more streamlined and focused. And when the recording was completed, it was known as

Stairway To Heaven.

a building crescendo of

"People always ask me if we all sensed that Stairway was something special while we were working on it,' Jones said. "To be honest, the answer is no. We all knew that Jimmy was working on something special, and we had heard snippets of song parts, but we didn't know how they would fit together. Once we heard what we had created when the recording was finished we did know it was special. It was everything that Led Zeppelin was to be."

With their legacy firmly entrenched in rock history, Zeppelin set out to conquer new frontiers. During the early '70s the band members took increasingly long vacations away from each other, absorbing various cultures as they sojourned across the planet. One particularly open to new influences proved to be Plant, who began spending more and more time in such exotic ports-of-call as India and Morocco. Many of those influences popped up on the group's next album, Houses Of The Holy, one of the group's most complex and eclectic efforts. While some long-time fans bemoaned the group's apparent reliance on meandering song structures, numbers like The Rain Song seemed to take on a

life of their own once they were performed on the con-

"Many of the songs served as a springboard on stage," Page related. "There was no point in simply recreating the album versions when you played live. We wanted to expand them and see where they went. That was part of Zeppelin's live excitement. Nobody knew exactly what sounds would emerge that night-including us.

The hectic recording schedule that characterized the band's first five years began to change after Houses Of The Holy. It would be over two years before the group's next album, the two-record set, Physical Graffiti, was released in March, 1975. But it wasn't as if the band's members had taken a rest from the creative process. On each and every track of PG the imprint of artistic passion

could be felt- even if those efforts occasionally failed to hit the mark. At this point in their career, the last thing Zeppelin wanted to do was live off of past glories; their goal was to continually traverse new musical terrain, to follow the Star Trek credo of going where no band had gone before. On stage, the band was never better, with old and new material melding into a magical mix of rock reactants. Some of those special moments were captured at tour's end for the film The Song Remains The

"I've always had mixed emotions about the movie," Plant said. "Parts are wonderful, others are somewhat

It would be three years until Led Zeppelin would reenter recording studio with only the release of The Song Remains The Same movie— and its accompanying album— to fill the word for Zeo-o-ohiles. They did tour America in 1977, a road trek that was initially dokayed due. to Plant contracting a pasty case of tonsillits and later cut short when the singer's young son, Karac, died of a myster nous stomach ailment. The rock press of the era went to great lengths trying to establish some sont it "Zeppelin Curse" noting Pages well-known fondness for the occur might be at the root of this situation. Dicourse, all this proved to be total rubbish, but when Sonham was to die four years later talk of The Curse again reared its ugly head. Those 1977 tour dates would prove to be the band's

His son's death cast a pail of depression over Plant that lasted for the better part of two years. In fact, at times there lasted for the better part of two years. In fact, at times there was talk that Zeppelin's career was over due to both their singer's unwillingness to continue and Page's inability to kick his ever-increasing drug dependences. But, finally, by late 1978 the band once again gathered in Stockholm. Sweden to begin work on their next album. In Through The Out Door, Due to the problems of his handmates. Jones was more in control of the album than anyone else and his diligence brought out the best in exercising process was completed in three weeks, and such tracks as in The Eventual meaning among the best in userd history. But the entire recording process was Evening emerged as among the best in band history But there were bad vibes abounding, though no one could place their finger on exactly what the problem was Perhaps it was and perhaps it was real or a decadent lifestyle, but those on the scene sensed mail ed Zeopelin was headed for trouble

I don't know if we sensed anything other than that we were making new music and diamning new lours." Jones said. "But we were older and had other responsibilities in our lives. It really was that simple."

In Through The Out Door was released in August 1979, and the band soon played their first live shows in two years in Copennagen, Denmark, Things seemed to be going well. area indiv well. The record proved to see a best-seller, receiving four-star reviews around the world, and talk of the band's hast U.S. tour since their aborted 1977 trek was on everytings lips. A full-scale European four was faunched in early 1980, with the

"In retrospect it's emering that we even survived that ordeal. Dut the fact is that we loved every second of it."



overindulgent. But then there are those who will say that overindulgence is the very definition of Led Zeppelin.'

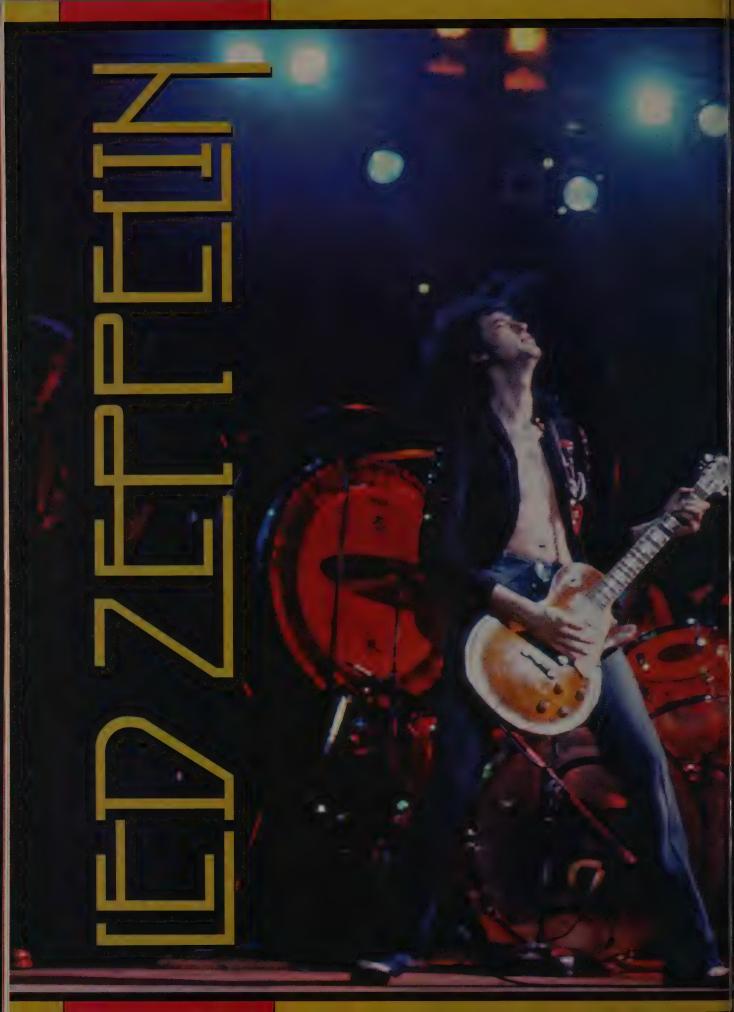
To follow that overindulgent bent, prior to beginning work on their next album, Presence, in 1976, Zeppelin decided to do something radical. They made the decision to start their own record label, Swan Song, and sign a variety of friends including Roy Harper, Maggie Bell and Bad Company. Of course, the most important band on the Swan Song roster was Led Zeppelin, and with their own label behind them, the band decided to try their most experimental work on Presence. Much of the album's nomadic, uncentered feel is due to the fact that the band members worked mostly on their own during the writing process, with Plant recovering from an auto accident in California, and Page residing in a variety of places due to his new-found status as a British tax exile

"Those were unusual times," Jones said. "Robert had suffered a horrendous auto crash, and we all were somewhat nomadic because of the tax question. All those elements flavored Presence, though I think the album had some outstanding moments.

during a set that frequently ran over three hours in length Fans everywhere rejoiced, and American Zep heads, in particular reloiced when official tour dates

That tour would never happen. On September 24, 1980, shortly after rehearsals for that American tour John Bonham started downing shots of volka, it is estimated that he downed over 40 shots during a 12-hour outside of London and went to sleep. He never woke Four months later, after much rumor and speculation the surviving band members issued this brief statement.

The loss of our dear friend, and the deep sense of us to decide that we could not continue as we were







hile many State-side hard rock fans may not instantly regale in the name or image of Slade, there's no are very familiar with the band's music. Unfortunately, the vast majority of rockers know such purposely misspelled tunes as Cum On Feel the Noize and Mama Weer All Crazee Now more from interpretations than from the far-morespirited early-'70s originals. But the fact is that no matter how one may know of Slade's energetic, powerful, sing-along anthems, there's no doubt that from the moment of their birth in the post-Beatles late '60s, right up through their various projects of recent vintage, these English glam/metal aces continually proved themselves to be one of the most entertaining and compelling bands of their rock and roll era.

E NOIZE

During their early-70s Golden Age, when such songs as Skweese Me Pleeze Me and Gudbuy T' Jane kept them perpetually at the top of the European charts, there was no question that guitarist/vocalist Noddy Holder. bassist Jimmy Lea, guitarist Dave Hill and drummer Don Powell had created a sound that was as unique as anything any hard rock band had ever put forth Blending sturdy guitar-driven rhythms with Holder's sandpaper-and-brokenglass vocal style. Stade's music was as infectious as it was different. At a time

nompous, over-the-top instrumental excess seemed to permeate every pore of the rock machine, Slade's short, urgent, bombastic bursts of pure hard rock energy proudly stood out from the rock rabble like snow on a summer's day.

"It's never been particularly easy to describe the music of Slade," Hill said. "It's always been a combination of influences, as well as a combination of the personalities of the people involved. We've always liked to believe that when you heard one of our songs you knew

who it was right away"

Starting out musical life in the English Midlands as the N'Betweens, by 1968 this quartet had changed their name to Ambrose Slade (a name that lasted for about a year before being shortened to the more tonguetripping Slade) and taken on a big-time manager, Chas Chandler, who at that time also happened to be managing none other than Jimi Hendrix. In an attempt to stand out from the crowd, Slade initially adopted a "skin head" look in order to cash in on a youth fashion phenomenon of the late '60s. But with British

officials desperately trying to cut back on soccer hooliganism, and the skin head image being directly tied to the primary perpetrators of stadium violence, it was quickly decided for the band to grow out their locks and take on a more "glam rock" appearance. It was a logical decision in light of the success then being enjoyed by such upstart attractions as the Sweet, T. Rex and David Bowie. But despite any outwardly "glam" appearance, Slade's rough-'n-ready sound, and blue collar looks betrayed their true musical instincts. This was a hard rock band whose debut album title, 1970's Play It Loud, told the real story surrounding this unit's musical perspectives.

"Slade may have wanted to be 'glam', but their sound was just too heavy," said a long-time observer of the English rock scene. "And, to be honest, they just weren't 'pretty' enough. Noddy looked like a character straight from a Dickens novel, and Don looked like an athlete, so they didn't have that somewhat androgynous look that was so popular with many rock

stars of the time.

They may have been short on androgyny,



but Slade was unquestionably "long" on footstomping fun. Especially on stage-where their highly theatrical shows hit high gear, and Holder's top-hatted, tartan-wearing image became an iconic look throughout Europe-Slade's live appearances became instant sellouts, almost single-handedly issuing in the arrival of the now-traditional "arena rock" approach. But while the band enjoyed unprecedented press support and fan reaction throughout the Continent (where they produced #1 singles at a rate previously equaled only by the Beatles), on this side of the Atlantic it was a far different story. While repeated American tours served to slowly increase the group's following, even at the peak of their early-'70s fame, Slade was little more than a curiosity to the same State-side fans that had helped turn the likes of Bowie and T. Rex into international sensations.

"It was rather frustrating," Hill said. "We began spending more and more time in the States, and the results didn't always justify the effort. We could have been playing huge shows throughout Europe when we were rele-

gated to relatively small halls in America. But our management and record company thought it was important, so we did it... and we enjoyed it. It all just never produced quite the results we were hoping for."

ing for."
While they were working hard to break through on American shores, something interesting was occurring back home. The English

"Our music has always been a combination of influences, as well as a combination of the personalities involved."



Stade

of the mid-70s was rather rapidly beginning to change, and after the release of their successful "rockumentary" movie, *Flame*, in 1975. Slade began to notice a growing sense that their time in the spotlight was rapidly drawing to a close. By the time they released the ironically titled **What Ever Happened to Slade?** in 1977, the first vestiges of both the "new wave" and punk music revolutions had begun, leaving Slade's rowdy-yet-predictable style somewhat in the dust. Yet despite losing their top-rung status in the hearts and minds of their faithful Euro fans, Slade continued to hang on, producing albums at almost yearly intervals throughout the '80s (which included a few hit singles such as *Run Runaway*) and touring regularly. Finally, in 1991, after 25 years at the band's helm, Holder decided to quit the band and start a mildly successful career as a character actor. Lea soon retired, leaving Hill and Powell to continue on... which they've done to this very day.

they've done to this very day.

"We called the band Slade II for a while after Noddy and Jim left," Hill said. "But then Noddy agreed that we should still be called Slade—even with some new members. Hopefully the fans who have seen us, whether they remember us from the '70s or weren't even born at that time, are enjoying the fact that we're still

PHOTOS: LAURENS VAN HOUTEN / FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY





my home, so I'm not totally sure. I believe it's one of the largest collection of vintage Flying Vs around. And I play all of them! I think it would be a shame to have so many wonderful guitars and not use them. I think I'd rather give them away than have them never used.

MJ: I think he must have more "Vs" than that! Sometimes it seems like he has a different one with him every day in the studio. But he does try and use many of them, though I know he has a few favorites.

RS: That is true, there is one particular black and white one that I love. I play that one on stage all the time, and it's on all of our albums. I also play a white one that has a wonderful sound.

HP: Is there a particular year that most of the guitars you play were made?

RS: Most of them are at least 35 years old. The white one I was just talking about is a 1967 model— a classic! I think I have one from every year the "V" was manufactured, which is something I set out to do when I first started collecting them. I really only have interest in the classic original models. The reissues I'm sure are very good, but they're not of much interest to me.

HP: You have one of the most clearly defined rhythm/lead parings in rock with PHOTO: FRANK WHITE

Rudolf playing rhythm and Matthias taking the leads. Does it *always* work that way?

MJ: Let's say it usually works that way. But Rudolf occasionally plays a lead on an album or on stage. In fact, I think he's quite a good lead player, but he seems to really enjoy playing rhythm guitar more. I play rhythm at times during most of our songs, along with Rudolf, but I do enjoy playing the leads breaks, the solos. They really give you a chance to express yourself.

RS: I've never felt limited by playing rhythm guitar. It's what I have always done best. When I was young, and my brother Michael and I were first putting this band together, I naturally played rhythm because he was so much more gifted as a lead guitarist. I never felt a particular need to play solos. I was happy playing rhythm guitar then, and I'm happy doing it now.

HP: Rudolf, you've played with a number of great guitarists over the years— your brother and Uli Roth as well as Matthias. Do you have to change your style to work with different guitarists?

RS: No. I believe *they* were usually the ones who had to change their playing a bit to fit into the Scorpions. I know that when Matthias joined the band about 25 years ago, there was naturally a period of transition for him, as well as for us. But he certainly adapted quickly and well.

MJ: When you join the Scorpions, I guarantee that *you* are the one required to make any changes. Rudolf's guitar work is the foundation of this band, and that's not about to change for anything or anyone.

HP: Matthias, earlier you mentioned that playing a guitar solo gives you a chance to express yourself. Do your solos change on stage from night to night?

MJ: Some of my solos change more than others. There are some, like on *Rock You Like A Hurricane*, that stay mostly the same every night because they really play an important part in the song's structure. On other songs, there is more of a chance to try a few new things. It changes a bit from night to night, but there is no great experimentation going on at every show.

RS: We feel that many of the fans are expecting a song to sound a certain way, and we like to give them what they want. We're not trying to play every song note-fornote off of the album when we play it live, but we don't feel it necessary to take a four minute song and turn it into a ten minute song. But the Scorpions have always built their reputation on being an exciting live act, and one of the reasons for that is that we don't mind doing whatever is necessary to make the show a memorable experience for everyone there.



years this legendary Canadian power trio—comprised of bassist/vocalist Geddy Lee, drummer/lyricist Neil Peart and guitarist Alex Lifeson-has blazed a trail unlike any other band on the contemporary music landscape. With their penchant for creating complex, multi-layered rock opuses and putting on some of the greatest stage shows in rock history, Rush has certainly made their mark on the hard rock world. Today, with the release of their latest disc **Snakes & Arrows**, Rush have further established their artistic identity in the 21st Century— while steadfastly holding on to many of the concepts and philosophies that made them one of the previous century's most hallowed acts. Recently we discussed Rush past, present and future with the ever-informative Mr. Lee.

Hit Parader: How do you view Rush's

Geddy Lee: I think we're in a very good state. We went through a very tough period a few years ago. There were things that happened in our personal lives that made us wonder if Rush would ever work together again. For a long time Neil understandably just didn't have any desire to think about music. But after a while, he began to realize that music was still something he loved, and from that point on we began to move forward. We haven't stopped since. Now, with Snakes & Ladders we've created an album that represents some-HP: What can you still add to Rush's creative and it worked out very well. the things we never set out to do is top ourselves

thing truly special to us.

spectrum?

GL: Each album we've ever done has had very individual elements, but when you look at it as a whole, it's still very much a Rush album. One of or mimic what we've done in the past. When we get together to make music, that's exactly what we do. It's a creative process that yields a variety of results. Some may be instantly familiar to Rush fans while some others may not. Taken as a whole, however, they represent the culmination of who and what we are.

HP: Over the last few discs you've started to coproduce your own albums. Why?

GL: We've come to the realization that nobody

knows what Rush is supposed to sound like better than we do. We've worked with some great producers over the years, but we've come to rely on our own opinions as much as anyone's. On this one we co-produced with Nick Raskulinecz,

HP: As you look back over Rush's career, how do you see the band's music having changed?

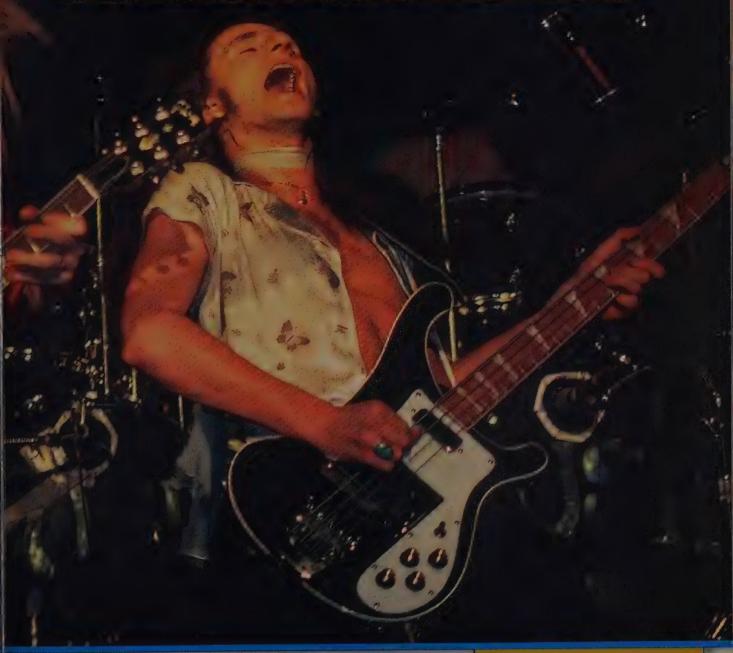
GL: Whatever changes have taken place have all been part of a fairly natural evolutionary process. I can't think of a time that we ever went out of our way to try and fit into any particular trend that was sweeping through the rock world. We've maintained a true belief in what we've done, and I feel our fans have appreciated that.

HP: Rush has been around for nearly 35 years.

does that fact amaze you?

GL: In some ways it definitely does. Sometimes it seems like we just started out yesterday, and at

"Each album we've ever done has had very individual elements, but when you look at it as a whole, it's still very much a Rush album."



other times it seems like we've been around even longer than that. But we still have a great passion for music and a great passion for this band, Over the years we've learned how to pace ourselves, when to take breaks, and how to keep everything fresh and exciting.

HP: Do you still enjoy touring as much as you ever did?

GL: We love playing together, but staying away from home, your family and your other duties can become tougher as you get a little older. It's not like when you're 21 and you can't wait to throw your gear in the back of a van and just head out to wherever the road takes you. These days a tour takes so much planning that it's truly a labor... of love.

HP: You used to record every live show. Do you still do that?

GL: We've always tended to record shows, more

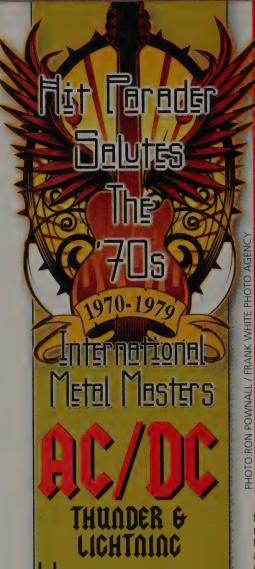
for our own edification than anything else. So we've had a catalog of live shows going back quite a long time. With music like ours, it's important to keep a monitor on things to hear how a song sounds and what we perhaps can do better. It's easy to start playing certain parts of songs too quickly when you're on stage. HP: In addition to your love for music, your passion for baseball has been well noted; you even sang the Canadian national anthem at the 1994 all-star game. Do you collect baseball memorabilia?

GL: As a matter of fact I've got quite a collection of rare autographed baseballs. The most valuable ones I have include a ball that has the signatures of both Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth. I also have a ball signed by Ty Cobb, and I recently picked one up that was signed by Cy Young. HP: Those are all stars of baseball's past. Do

you collect items from today's stars as well?

GL: I have some, but I think I'm more attracted to the items from the stars from an earlier era. I've been lucky to get to know quite a few of today's players and it's great that some of them have as much respect for Rush as I have for baseball.

HP: What other hobbies do you have?
GL: I've always had a passion for photography, but recently I haven't worked with my cameras as much as I have in the past. My othen passion is travel. I like to combine those two interests by going on nature safaris all over the world. In recent years my family and I have been to East Africa and Nepal, and those were amazing trips. When you can take photographs of wildlife in their natural environment, it's just an incredible experience.



o one in the rock world had ever seen anything quite like it before. The year was 1978 and AC/DC were on their first tour of the United States. They had already created quite a splash in Europe where their blistering three-chord guitar anthems had been welcomed with open arms by the Continent's rock-starved masses. Few on this side of the "Big Pond", however, had a clue about this Aussie assault force, although rumors abounded that they were led by a supposedly "demonic" schoolboy and a bare chested, tattooed vocalist with a voice that sounded like he had gargled on smashed glass. All soon were to discover the unique musical magic that has since enthralled two generations of rock fans— the magic of AC/DC.

As soon as the band hit the stage at 8 PM sharp as the opening act for a sinceforgotten headliner, the lucky few who had
gathered for the poorly advertised event at
New York's now-long-gone Palladium
Theater knew they were witnessing something special. There stood Angus Young, in
all his knock-kneed glory, toting a cherry
ed Gibson SG that at times seemed bigger
than he was. The show had barely begun,
but already the pint-sized axe demon was
sweating like he had just gone 15 tough
rounds with the lightweight champion of

the world. The songs came in rapid-fire order— barely giving the audience time to grasp and absorb the sonic assault that was coming their way. Each tune was raw, rude and rocking, a far cry from the "corporate" hard rock style that was dominating that era's chart action. From first note to last Angus was a whirling dervish, a non-stop cyclone of frenetic activity, as he rolled on the floor, pranced about the stage, and finally, climactically, dashed to the arena's upper deck in mid-song (Angus was one of the first guitarist to go "wireless"— out of necessity) while never missing a lick.

while never missing a lick.
While all this was going on, his alter ego, the craggy-faced frontman, Bon Scott, stood virtually motion-less— except, of course, when he either picked up the microphone to sing or lifted a handy bottle of Jack Daniels to drink. As chaos ensued around him, Bon remained the epitome of cool, collected calm. It was as if the burly Scott was most at home on the co

of cool, collected calm. It was as if the burly Scott was most at home on the concert stage, belting out the band's blue-collar anthems of love, lust and back door men as Angus caused a frenzy on all sides surrounding him. While Scott appeared old enough to be the father of Angus and his rhythm guitarist brother, Malcolm, there was an apparent camaraderie and an understanding between them that instantly told all who witnessed the show that this was more than just

another rock and roll band— this was a hard rockin' "family."

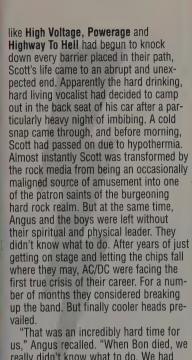
"Bon was the guy who really taught us everything," Angus said. "He had been around a lot more than we had, so he was the one who always kind of took charge of things. Without Bon there to guide us through, I don't know if we would have survived the first few years."

Bon & Angus

Regrettably, just as AC/DC was reaching their commercial peak in the early '80s, after albums

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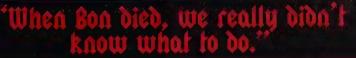


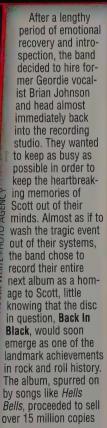
AC/DC sweat it out on stage.

The late Bon Scott

"That was an incredibly hard time for us," Angus recalled. "When Bon died, we really didn't know what to do. We had just started having some real success due to Highway To Hell, and everything seemed to be going our way. Then all of a sudden Bon was gone, and so were a lot of our dreams."







world-wide, establishing AC/DC as the biggest hard rock band anywhere. While Angus still has trouble fully comprehending the band's "overnight" success, he knows that Bon would have been proud.

"What happened with **Back in Black** was simply amazing," he said. "Everything just came together. Obviously there was a lot of interest in the band because of Bon's death, and we threw every bit of emotion we were feeling into that album. All the songs had a rather somber feel to them, but there was anger too. In a strange way, we were really mad at Bon for putting us through all that"

Indeed, as AC/DC hit the road for their first headlining tour of arenas, Johnson's appearance on stage was frequently met with cries of "We Want Bon." Rather than being offended, or concerned, by the crowd's response, the heavily-accented resident of Glasgow simply replied "I want Bon, too." From there, however, things only got better, by tour's end, AC/DC had hit a musical peak that they had never achieved with the charismatic but unpredictable Scott. Angus further established himself as one of the most inventive and entertaining guitar forces in rock history, and the band's reputation quickly evolved into the unmatched masters of riff rock.

"That was the turning point for us, no question about it," Angus said. "When success came it came in a huge way. It almost consumed us. But after Bon's passing, nothing else could throw us off course."



hilip Lynott had the soul of a poet. That's not something often said about one of the most influential hard rock musicians and song writers of his time. But when he wasn't stomping across the stage or creating epic, yet strangely radio-friendly albums with Thin Lizzy, this tall, thin, black Irishman would frequently sequester himself away in his home in the outskirts of Dublin to write books of poetry. Occasionally those efforts would surface in one of Lynott's heart-felt, street-savvy songs, but usually they either found themselves housed in one of his published poetry books, or hidden away on a secret shelf.

"Not all of my poems are for the public," Lynott told **Hit Parader** back in 1977. "Sometimes I just write them for myself or for one special person. I usually write those poems in a different way than I write my song lyrics, but occasionally one becomes the other."

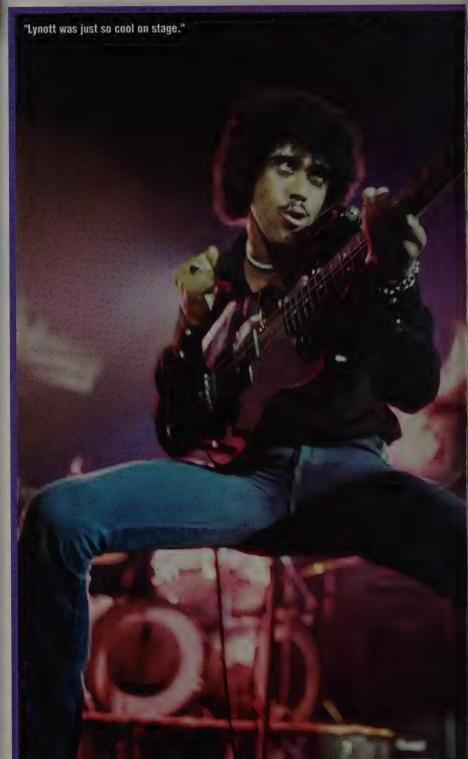
Clearly, Philip Lynott was about as atypical a rock star as one could ever hope to find. He was a dreamer in a world of pragmatists. He was a rock-

er who wasn't scared to sandwich a tune filled with acoustic tenderness between two full-throttle thrashers. He was someone who drew upon his

strong Irish roots to flavor both his music and his lyrics. And he was a black man operating within what was ostensibly the white man's world of rock and roll. Quite obviously, he was someone who stood out from the gathering throng both figuratively and literally. But as the driving force behind Thin Lizzy, Lynott helped provide style and substance to a band that helped set rock and roll precedents that are still

being admired, and followed, today.

That group's dual-lead guitar format, lilting melodies and hard driving rhythms may have initially made only a minor impression upon the hard rock masses of that time—many of whom seemed better focused on the more blatant sounds brought forth by the likes of Kiss and Sabbath. But over the ensuing years that impact has expanded at an almost exponential rate, with songs such as Dancing In the Moonlight, Jailbreak and the timeless The Boys Are Back in Town creating one of the truly great legacies in contemporary music history. Indeed, the



influence of both Lynnott and Thin Lizzy on successive generations of bands—including the likes of Metallica and Def Leppard, both of whom have covered Lizzy songs on album-has proven to be one of the most enduring and endearing histories in contemporary music annals.

"Thin Lizzy was one of the bands that first opened my ears to rock music," said Def Leppard vocalist Joe Elliott. "Lynott was just so cool on stage, and his songs were magic. They had an almost hypnotic power— they were so perfectly structured and delivered. And when you throw in those

beautifully synchronized double guitar leads, you had a truly unique and special band.

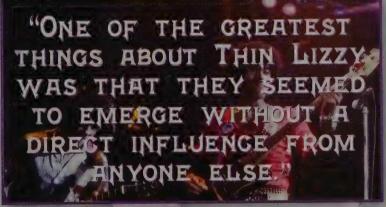
Throughout the '70s, Thin Lizzy's "bad" reputation as a brilliant album band and a killer on-stage attraction continued to grow. From the moment their first hit Whiskey In The Jar—later covered by Metallica—broke in 1973 it became clear that this was a band with something very different to say, and a very different way of saying it.

else," said an industry insider. "There were tastes of so many things, bits and pieces of both American and European sensibilities. But what always shined through was a hodge-podge that was all directly from

Lynott's imagination."

Unfortunately, despite all of his creative brilliance, there was also a darker side to Lynott's mystique— one that eventually served to take his life in 1986. Even as far back as the band's break-out American tour in 1975, when they were the special guests of Rainbow (basically because that group's leader, Ritchie Blackmore, was an avowed fan of Lizzy's), Lynott was forced to cancel many dates for what was then diagnosed as "hepatitis". But behind the scenes it was well known at he had developed a nasty drug habit, one that would follow him throughout his adult life and eventually lead to his untimely demise.

But we're not here to mourn Lynott's passing; rather we're here to celebrate the music he created with the one and only Thin Lizzy. While the band's lineup would change over the years (eventually presenting such renowned guitarists as Gary Moore-with whom Lynott had briefly been in an English



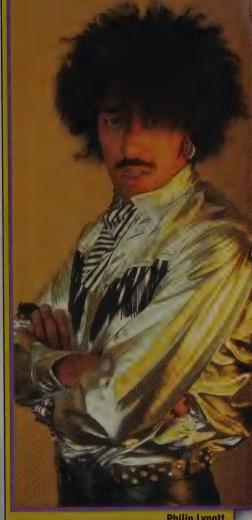
Working most notably with guitarists Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson, along with drummer Brian Downey, bassist/vocalist Lynott helped forge some of that decade's most superlative discs, including Nightlife, Fighting, Jailbreak and Bad Reputation, each of which melded conventional hard rock dynamics with snippets of everything from Irish folk music to American countrywestern. Throw in for good measure, the tough-nosed street bravado that Lynott brought with him from his upbringing in Dublin, and what you emerged with was a band fully capable of playing just about anything... and making it uniquely their own in the process.

One of the greatest things about Thin Lizzy was that they seemed to emerge without a direct influence from anyone

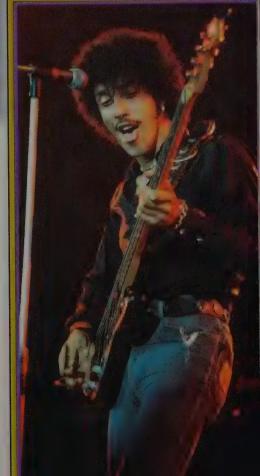
band called Skid Row in the late '60s-John Sykes and Snowey White) it was the band's core quartet of Lynott, Downey, Roberston and Gorham who will always be associated with the group's Golden Age. Somewhat amazingly—and even alarmingly-since 1996 there has been a Lizzy revival, with Sykes serving as the band's frontman in the late Lynott's stead. While Gorham has been part of these various "reunions" to at least provide a semblance of "respectability", the fact is that a Thin Lizzy without Philip Lynott is kind of like the Beatles without John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

"I don't think either John or Scott is trying to do any disservice to Lizzy's memory," said our industry source. "I think they would be among the first to admit the fact that without Lynott, Thin Lizzy just isn't the same band. But they're doing something noblethey're trying to celebrate both the music and the man that created it, while keeping it alive for a new generation. It is, after all, guite a good ambition.'

ALL PHOTOS: FRANK WHITE



Philip Lynott



Fit Parader

Dalviss

the ultimate parable of rock and roll fame and fortune.

From the moment of their inception in 1973, Kiss were designed to be everything any kid who ever picked up an electric guitar dreamed of being. They were loud, they were arrogant, and they were bigger than life. Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley and Peter Criss were comic book

"Demon" Gene or Peter the "Cat". Kiss was both omnipresent and omnipotent, the band that was destined to single-handedly revolutionize both the commercial and theatrical ethic of the hard rock empire... or die trying! Along the way they also helped establish the notion that America could produce hard rock bands capable of

Gene Simmons



here's no question that the '70s were Kiss' Golden Age. Back then, long before they turned into heavy metal's equivalent of the Beach Boys, endlessly churning out their hits from 25 years earlier to an increasingly more middle-aged fan-base, everything about this face-painted, high-stepping, blood-spurting New York-based unit seemed fresh, new and exciting. Everywhere they went back then they generated near-riots from their tast-growing following, who saw within these costumed crusaders, hard rock's next—and most entertaining—evolutionary step.

The fact is that it has now been well over than three decades since Kiss first exploded like a neutron bomb on the rock and roll scene; 30-plus years filled with incredible music, larger-than-life personalities and the most exciting stage show ever seen by the eyes of mortal man. To say the least. Kiss has come a long way during that time. It has been a period filled with many incredible victories a few stunning setbacks, battles against drugs and alcohol and even the tragicyet-heroic death of a band member along the way. It is a tale worthy of a Hollywood script (though most would never believe it.) It is a tale worthy of filling a trove of books. It certainly is a tale worth documenting in comic books (ch. sorry, that's already been done.) Quite simply, it is the tale of Kiss - perhaps

heroes come-to-life, four costumed crusaders who just-so-happened to be the biggest band on earth. At the height of their mid-'70s commercial powers, when such albums as **Destroyer**, **Love Gun** and **Kiss Alive** ranked as must-have staples of any high school kid's record collection, Kiss were more than "mere" musical taste makers. They were a multinational conglomerate that spread their influence over a wide swath of rock-related terrain which included television shows, movies, merchandise and record labels.

It was virtually impossible to walk by a newsstand or turn on the radio in 1976 without confronting "Star Child" Paul, "Space" Ace, standing up to their British brethren such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath— at least in terms of fame if not musical dexterity. While some cynics would try to quickly dismiss the group as little more than a quartet of no-talent charlatans masquerading as rock stars, their never-ending string of hits, and their ability to create truly unforgettable inconcert experiences, made Kiss virtually impervious to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

Seeing Kiss on stage in their costumed prime was a pure eye-popping, jaw-hanging, ear-blasting experience that nothing this side of a nuclear explosion could match. From the moment the lights went up, catching the four musical "brothers" standing together at the top

of their stage's giant ramp-way, the crowd knew they were in for a non-stop two hour rock and roll thrill-ride, the likes of which nobody had ever seen before. With Gene performing his nightly "staples" of breathing fire

despite all of that, it didn't always go exactly how we had planned. I remember once when we all came down the steps at the start of the show, and I looked

dented in the long annals of rock history. Inspired by the moderate suc-

Paul Stanley

Kiss in mid-concert strut

'Ace had been standing in some water when he touched his guitar, and he ended up giving himself one hell of a shock.

blood, and Paul prowling the footlights like a caged lion, a Kiss concert was a bas-tardized cross between a circus side show and a Broadway-musical-from-hell. Through it all, however, the Kiss Army ate it up. They stood and cheered from first note to last. singing along with every tune and flailing their arms in wild abandon as they played air guitar in honor of each of Ace's searing six string solos.

"We planned everything for maximum impact," Stanley said. "I don't think there's ever been a rock and roll band that's spent more time in the planning of their stage show. We worked on the stage itself with the best engineers in the business, and the lighting effects were years ahead of their time. But,

nowhere to be seen. Then I looked up to the top of the platform we had just come down and all I could see were his huge, silver platform boots sticking into the air. Evidently he had been standing in some water when he touched his guitar, and he ended up giving himself one hell of a shock."

The shock that Frehley gave himself on stage that night was nothing in comparison to the shock the entire rock world felt as Kiss began dominating the music scene as no band had done before. From their humble beginnings in New York City in 1973 when four gentlemen named Stanley Eisen (Paul) Chiam Klein (Gene), Paul Frehley (Ace) and Peter Crisscuola (Peter) first married their fortunes together, theirs was a unique rocket ride straight to the top- a journey unpreceDolls, Kiss jumped into the fray with a well planned approach that left little to chance They knew the critics would hate them. They knew that mainstream rock society would shun them like the plague. But they also knew that a new generation of kids had come along who were searching for rock and roll heroes to identify with- and Kiss were determined to be those heroes.

We all had come from rather conservative backgrounds." Simmons explained. "I was guys who shared a musical vision and were determined to do just about anything to make that vision a reality. We knew that our regular jobs meant long hours and little pay. We knew rock and roll meant money, women and travel. It wasn't a tough choice to make.

Wicked

Hs I Walk Chrough Che Valley Of Che Shadow Of Death, I fear No Evil

(FOR LAM THE BADDEST MOTHER FOR SER IN THE VALLEY)

Better To Be An Open Sinner Than A

False Saint

Let Those Who Do Not Understand Me Fear Me

> Let Those Who Understand Me Fear Chemselves

The Seeds Of Oppression Will One Day Bear The Fruit Of Rebellion

Its a Bands On Trind of Lesson



Date for Bate and Ruth for Ruth Eve for Eve and Cooth for Cooth

Scorn for Scorn and Smile for Smile

Love for Love and Suile for Suile War for War and Woe for Woe

Blood for Blood and Blow for Blow

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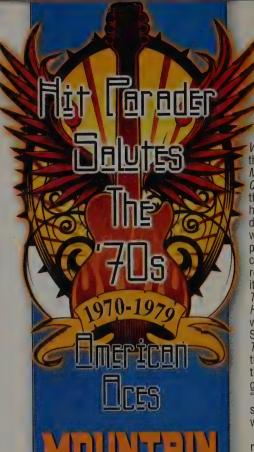
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KORA-SPRINGFIELD, MO
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KJML-JOPLIN, MO
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KSJS-SAN JOSE, CA
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MOUNTEIN LIVIN' LARGE

Ingland had Cream. America had Mountain. The links between the two groups were apparent; after all, both bands were power trios featuring guitarists of immense talent and charisma—and, lest we forcet. Mountain founder/bassist Felix Pappalardi had served as the prodocor on some of Cream's best work. But their differences were just as obvious. While Gream featured Eric Clapton—a lean, handsome, cultural icon whose brilliant solos frequently inspired his foillowers to inscribe "Clapton is God" on London walls. Mountain featured Lestie West—a portly, Jewish kild from Queens, whose equally inspired noodlings occasionally drove his foillowers to write "West is Fat" on the walls of his suburban New York hood.

"We weren't the ones that made those comparisons with Cream," said long-time Mountain drummer Corky Laing. "The rock press first jumped unit, and ran with it. But we weren't about to complain. After all, when you're compared to a great band featuring incredible musicians, there's really nothing to say. But it was left up to us to make sure that we made our own mark as Mountain... and I'm pretty sure that we did."

Yup, they made a mark aloght, one that some 35 years later still rings true with memorable songs such as Nantucket Sleighride. Theme From An

Imaginary Western, and the immortal Mississippi Queen. Indeed. the latter tune has become so deeply ingrained within contemporary American culture that as recently as 2005 it appeared in both The Dukes of Hazard remake as well as in Adam Sandler's popular The Longest Yard-

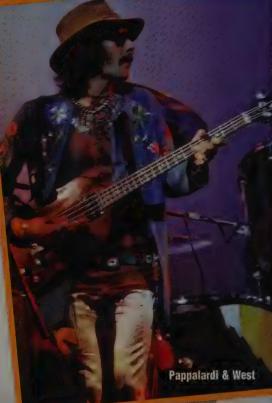
there as the musical inspiration for the racist prison guard played by wrestler "Stone Cold" Steve Austin to sneer the line, "now that's the way a white man plays guitar!"

way a white man plays guitar!" But, despite their '70s notoriety and degree of lasting fame, there was clearly and unfortunately another side to the Mountain saga. While they quickly became one of the most popular rock bands of their era, with discs like Climbing and Nantucket Sleighride reaching the top of the sales charts, there was always a dark aura surrounding the band's persona that seemed to hold them back from attaining their greatest destiny. Rumors of unsavory off-stage predilections often followed the group around, while there was often a tempestuous relationship between Pappalardi and his wife/creative partner, Gail Collins, eventually leading to her shooting and killing the talented bassist/producer in 1983.

"That's still so shocking to think about," Laing said. "It's hard to fathom. Felix was so talented on so many levels, especially as a musician and producer. We always shared a great deal of respect. Obviously, without him there never would have been a Mountain."

For all their supposed "packaging" as an instant American supergroup, Mountain's birth was an affair of decided happenstance. Back in 1968, while Pappalardi was cutting his production teeth with Cream, West (then Weinstein) was earning his stripes as leader of a New York based blues/rock band called the Vagrants. When that group realized their career path was headed nowhere fast, West decided to record a solo disc—and hired on Pappalardi (who was immediately struck by West's incredible guitar talents) as producer. The pair immediately hit it off, with

Pappalardi supplying the solo album with both his booming bass runs and spiritual guidance. Within weeks the duo had decided to form a band, taking the title of West's solo disc. Mountain. as their group moniker. They started writing material and appearing at New York



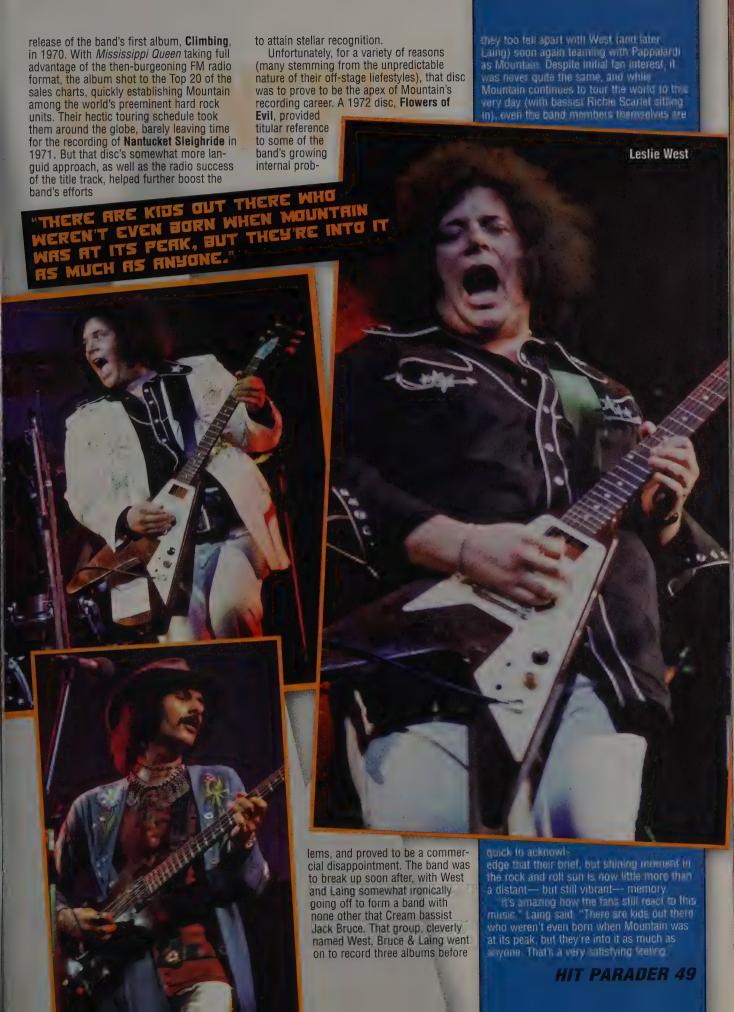
area clubs... all leading up to their fourth live show ever being at 1969's historic Woodstock Festival, where the band performed in front of more than 250,000 fans.

"David Crosby uttered a famous line about how scared he was at Woodstock," West stated. "I was so nervous that I don't know if I could have even spoken that much! We had been a band for such a short time, it's amazing that it all came off as well as it did."

Since they had no group album out at the time of their Woodstock set, few in the audience—more attuned to the soft-rock style created by the likes of CSN&Y and Joe Cocker—could relate to Mountain's decidedly heavy rock sound. But that high-profile gig served as the perfect foundation for the

48 HIT PARADER

ALL PHOTOS: LAURENS VAN HOUTEN / FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY





hese days, despite their on-going road presence, you might get the impression that. Aerosmith are little more than a "greatest hits" factory— a band that releases either a live or studio compilation of their past accomplishments on an annual basis. But while those in charge of their glorious past may well be milking the proverbial Aero-cow dry, lets never forget that this band which came to life with the release of their legendary single *Dream On* waaay back in 1973, today remains as viable and buyable as *any* band currently operating in the hard rock market place.

bad Boys have accomplished during their lengthy stint atop the rock world—and considering all that they had to survive in order to get there—vocalist Steven Tyler has a hard time accepting the fact that Aerosmith is now celebrating their 34th Anniversary. To the eternally young frontman, at times it seems as if the band he formed so long ago with guitarist Jos Perry, bassist Tom Hamilton, guitarist Brad Whitford and drummer Joey Kramer is still the new-kid-on-the-block, a band still struggling to truly establish their reputation as America's premier blues-rock contingent. But to the generations of fans that have grown up under Aerosmith's pervasive influence, this seminal blues-based unit remain a true rock and roll institution—though Tyler would certainly joke

"I do still feel young, and I still feel we have something to prove" the large-lipped frontman stated. "I look around and still see musicians

that he is too young to be "institutionalized."

like Eric Clapton as well bands like the Stones and Who— all of whom were my influences when I was growing up— being active and productive. In comparison to them, we're just a bunch of pups. Yeah, it's great when a lot of young bands come along and tell us how much we've meant to them and how much they admire us. But we're not necessarily

here to be admired and adored—we're here to play some great rock and roll."

To many American rock and roll fans Aerosmith have always represented something special, a band that in many ways was bigger than life, a group that exemplified the freewheeling, fun-loving, anythinggoes attitude that has always been at the heart of rock and roll's appeal. Quite simply, Aerosmith has always been the band we could truly call our own. Emerging in the early '70s, at a time when American rock and roll bands still played second fiddle to their British brethren, the band's raucous, roadhouse sound was immediately compared to that of everyone from the Rolling Stones, to Led Zeppelin to the Yardbirds (the latter of whom, as legend has it, Tyler briefly worked for as a "roadie" during his youth). But there was something about Aerosmith that made them instantly stand out from the crowd of neo-Brit poseurs.

Sure Tyler had Mick's lips and Perry had conveniently borrowed Keith's guitar swagger, but Aerosmith never needed to rely on anyone or anything in order to garner a lion's share of attention. After all, they were playing American music—the blues—in a distinctly American way. What the Stones and Zeppelin may have had to pick up second-hand, Aerosmith seemed to have had injected directly into their veins. From the moment their self-titled debut disc was released in 1973, there was no mistaking it—Aerosmith were going to give American rock and roll the credibility it

had long craved.

"We started out as a band that loved playing the blues and loved playing rock and roll, and when you think about it, that's still pretty much what we are today," Perry said. "We never expected this to last for the long-run. I don't think any of us ever gave it much thought. We were just all interested in making it to the next day. I remember in the early days how we all lived in this tiny apartment in Boston. It was cold, there was never any food, but every Saturday night we'd have a big party. It was a blast."

The "party" for Aerosmith soon became a virtually non-stop event. The success of their debut disc was followed in short order by 1974's Get Your Wings, 1975's Toys In The Attic and 1976's Rocks. Each disc sold progressively more than its predecessor, with Toys becoming the group's first platinum seller, and Rocks their first venture into double-platinum. With radio picking up on each of the band's single releases— with such tunes as Sweet Emotion and Walk This Way becoming both AM and FM staples - and the group's concert performances drawing rave reviews from coast to coast, Aerosmith soon found themselves in the enviable position of not only being one of America's biggest rock and roll attractions, but one of the biggest rock attractions on Earth! It was all heady stuff for these five young rockers, and some of the fame - and accompanying fortune - began to go directly to the band's collective head.

"Hey, we were all a bunch of young single guys on the road," Tyler said. "What do you think was going on. Women were everywhere, drugs were everywhere, alcohol was everywhere— we tried everything, and we tried a lot of it. There's no question that it started hav-

we're not necessarily here to be admired and adored—we're here to play some great rock and roll."

ing a real rad effect on as. There started to be some real problems within the band. Looking back on it, it was really said. Here we were at what should have been the happiest times of our lives, and we were blowing it—both figuratively and literary.

The stones of both Aerosmiths excesses, and use inner turmoi—filled the rock wires. Even on stage where Tyler's hip-shaking gyrations and scarf-drippin microphone stand had fast become trademarks, there was a big drop-off in both band energy and cohesion. Despite the group's obvious internal problems they struggled ahead releasing the highly successful Draw.

The Line in 1977 and Live Bootleg in 1978. But by this time the group gathered together to begin work on Night in The Ruts in 1979 the writing was apparently already on the wall. Perry, who had long been like a brother to Tyler, openly began resenting both the frontman's dominance over the group, and his growingly unpredictable demeanor. Soon after the disc's release, Perry quit the band to begin his own Joe Perry Project with whom he directed three moderately successful albums. As if Perry's defection wasn't enough of a distraction, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems in structor, there were soon to be more problems and the proposed the proposed to the



recalls, it looked like Asmorth was truly between a

You know, what's really unfortunate is that I was so significance of what had happened was kind of lost on me," he said. "I was more concerned about taking care of my own needs than anything else. I don't think I had a clue as to how much trouble I was in and how much trouble the band was in. Thankfully, we both made

It would still be a long, hard road for Tyler, Krames and Hamilton before Aerosmith would again enjoy smooth sailing. The band recruited guitarists Jimmy Crespo and Rick Dufay to replace Perry and Whitford. and began work on their next disc, Rock in A Hard Place an album that also happened to represent the end of their original contract with Columbia Records The record wasn't bad, but it barely managed to go gold, despite the best efforts of the label and the band's management to promote it to the max. Their 1983 world tour was met with lukewarm response from both fans and the media, and Tyler's growing health problems were evident to all in attendance. Many began to predict that Aerosmith wouldn't make it plummet towards total oblivion, a ray of light shore

through, On Valentine's Day, 1984, Perry and Whitford showed up unexpectedly at an Aerosmith concert in Boston. Within weeks it was announced that the band's original lineup would be reuniting for a "Back In The Saddle Tour"— and more importantly, both Tyler and Perry had agreed to try and kick their dependencies before returning to the road.

"We had to do it," Tyler said. "If we didn't we really didn't know what was going to happen. I just realized I was sick and tired of waking up on the bathroom floor of some hotel and not knowing where I was. It was killing me. But I'm strong. I knew once I put my mind to it, I could get myself together, and I did."

It proved to be a long, difficult trip through rehab, a trip filled with a never-ending series of temptations, distractions and diversions, but the self-proclaimed "Toxic Twins" finally made it through in flying colors. As if to honor their efforts, almost the day they proclaimed themselves to be free of offending chemicals, the reunited Aerosmith was offered a big-buck deal with high-flying Geffen Records. By early 1985 the hale-and-hearty unit was back in the studio working on Done With Mirrors, the disc that unbeknownst to Tyler, Perry and the boys, was to serve as the primary tool in reestablishing both Aerosmith's tarnished reputation and their stellar credentials. The eye-opening success of Done With Mirrors (which was followed by a sold-

out world tour) was quidity followed by a string or platinum successes for the band — 1937's **Permanent Vacation** (featuring the hit *Dude Looks Like A Lady*), and 1989's **Pump**, Each album was followed up with an ever-larger touring dinerary, during which the "dry to the bone. Toxic Twins celebrated each victory with diet sodas and bottles of "fake bee

Somewhere along the way (even Tyler & rot struction when it happened). Acrosmith found them selves transformed from an off-froubled, struggling 'wanna-be" band into the patron saims of the entire American rock and roll scene. Young groups like Guris N' Roses and Motley Crue poenly expressed their admiration for the group and leading forces both in me point media and MTV began treating the unit as if they indeed were one of the most powerful, influential and stuff for Tyler and company but they are it all up as a livere manna from heaven. Today, 35 years after their favorite and best rock and roll barn

For a long while I thought we were just survivue.

Tyler said. But then I began to realize that it was a inmore than that, that people were really digging our music, and realizing what we tent there. It really



GRAND FUNK RAILROAD AN AMERICAN BAND

ew bands in hard rock history have ever had the distinction of being more frequently dismissed, more critically decided and more artistically denounced than Grand Funk Railroad. But the fact of the matter is that despite the cumbersome, overwrought and occasionally plodding sound this Michigan-based unit uti-lized to execute their heavy-handed rock anthems during their early 70s prime, a scant few groups in musical memory managed to capitalize upon their time in the spotlight with more aplomb than vocalist/guitarist Mark Farner, drummer Don Brewer and bassist Mel Schacher. No question about it, while they may never have been critical faves or media darlings with a string of sold-out arenas tours to their credit and more than 25 mil-lion albums sold during their heyday (a time when they released no less than an astounding eight discs during a four-year period stretching from 1969-1973) this seminal power trio continually proving that they were the quintessential American Band. "I've always believed that we've gol-

"I've always believed that we've golton a bad rap." Brewer said, "if you go back and listen to those early albums there was a lot of diversity there. Yeah, the music was heavybut that's the way it was supposed to be. But mixed in with all the heavy stuff were some very interesting things. I don't know if the critics ever bothered to really listen, but we knew that the fans did, and that was what truly mattered."

Not only did those fans listen, but they responded in kind. Right from the start, when their debut disc. On Time, emerged in 1969 it was clear that Grand Funk Railroad was going to be a very different kind of rock and roll band. Based loosely on the three-man band concept pioneered by the likes of Cream, this unit never shied away from putting their instrumental prowess at the forefront of their attack though, in all honesty, they rarely exhibited the degree of virtuosity that warranted such attention. Yet as soon as their breakthrough single, *Closer to Home*, emerged in 1970, the GFR phenomenon began to build momentum like a run-away locomotive. By vear's end, they were breaking the Beatles' record for selling out New York's venerable Shea Stadium, moving over 50,000 tickets in just 71 hours... a record that still stands to this

day! "There was something about Grand Funk Railroad that just touched a responsive nerve within American rock fans," said a noted New York-based industry personality. "It was a time when Zeppelin was first emerging, and the whole hard rock sound was developing. Kids heard the brilliance of a Jimmy Page or a Jeff Beck—but those bands seemed so distant, as if they were from another planet. Grand Funk seemed so much more attainable and real. They were a blue collar band that sweated and grunted and played their hearts out. They may never have been as cerebral

or as ethereal as the European bands of that era, but they had one thing that those other bands could never attain... they were ours!"

And leave it to Grand Funk to play up their American heritage to-the-max. Indeed, in 1972 (after they had expanded their roster to four with the addition of keyboardist Graig Frost) they scored their biggest hit ever with the infectious tune, We're An American Band, a song that captured the essence of the unit's party-hearty attitude while allowing the group to finally break through to the commercial mainstream. Rather ironically, We're An American Band proved to be both GFR's zenith and nadir, for after reaching the peak of their powers, they would soon plummet from that lofty plateau, never to return again. Perhaps due to the success of that tune, the band assumed a somewhat more "pop" direction on

ther next two at asis.— Which the predominant received by the band's long-time, predominantly mate followers, and by 1976 the writing we on the wall. The band broke up amid the typical finger pointing and acronomy with many going off to launch a mildly successful sold career while the band's remaining three millibers thed to keep the fast-cooling embers the GFR magic alive in short-lived band called Flint.

The band's first era was an incredible lime for us. Brewer said: "Just think about it, us released a dozen albume in span—which is simply unimaginable in today's world. We did more in that period limit most or today's bands do in 20 years!

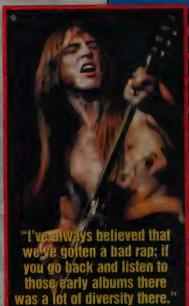
Despite all of their initial accomplishments and the bitter feelings that integred in the orea of their breakup, by 1980 Farner and Brewere tack together as grand Famic Railrold (with Dennis Bellinger on bass), and the ready to rock! They recorded two abouts in rapid succession, better of which managed for reignite the spark of fair interest that had propelled the band along a decade earlier. By 1961 this reunica had begun to run out of steam

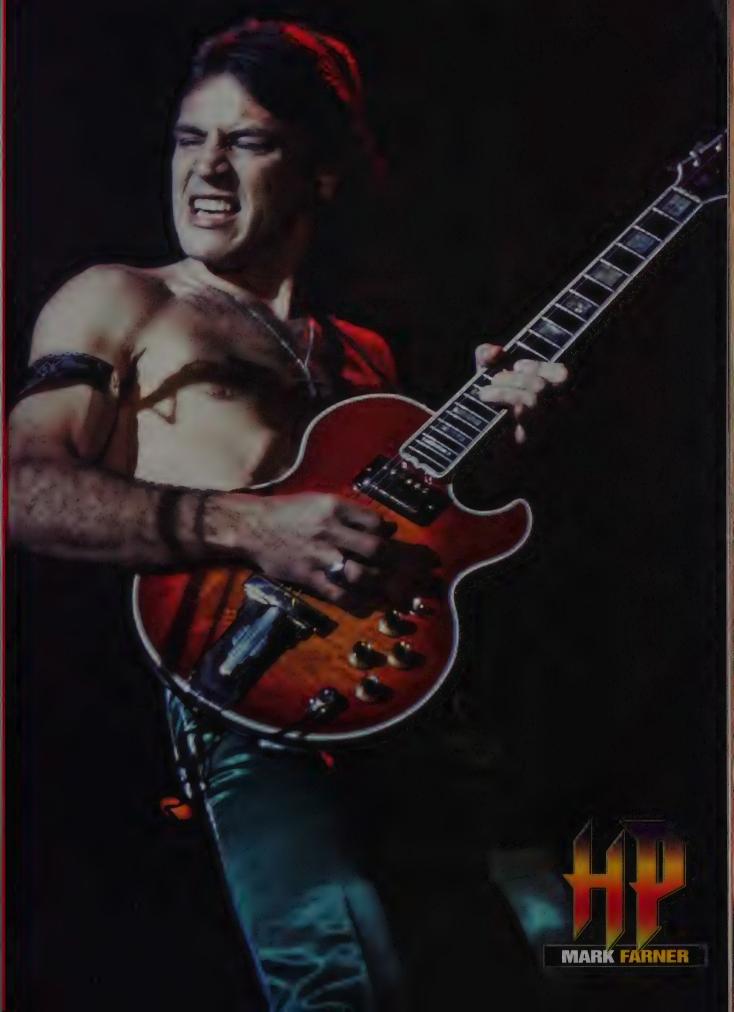
and once again the band a members headed for the halls. It wasn't until 1996 that a fully reunited unil (Farner, Brown and Schacher) once again full the concert stane object in front of surprisingly large crowds—many packed with fans who hadn't been born when CFR full hit the top of the chart. And while farner once again left the band in 1997 Brewer and Schacher continue to rock on, most recently with former Kiss guitarist Bruce Kulick as member of the band.

But despite wralling state Grand Funk Railrusd may find themselves. In today, in coes little to detract from the fact that for a brief, shining time in the earth 170s, they show the

stry there. They were are and the rown terms. They were are and the rown terms. They were are and the rown terms.

It's kind of funny and kind of sad high Grand Funk Railroad is so often dieflooked when theomes to listing the great hard including the form of the following source. "I think anyone would be fund pressed to fully explain why. They made the most of whatever abilities they had, and they had a lot of rans nappy along the way. It had is their legacy, it certainly had one to flat."







lice Cooper was the Big Bans of shock rock outrage. Prior to the based hard rock munster" eutrageous rock and roll behavior generally consist-ad of the Stones singing about spending the night together or ribald backstage tales of Zeopolin attacking some female follower with a mud shark. But all of that began to seem positively tame when the likes of Alice Cooper (which began as the band's name, but soon became linked directly to that unit's stringy baired, heavily mascaraed vocalist) start ed to present their distinctly different likes of which, quite simply, had not been witnessed since the fall of the Roman Empire some 2000 years earlier. With their penchant for pushing the

staid limits of 70s entertainment beyond soon became a sensation. Against all apparent odds, their albums such as Billion Dellar Babies, Easy Action and Luve It To Death became chart-topping successes, and their highly theatrical heavily planned, "anything goes" live amazed audienze and outraged citizenty

wherever it appeared. Tunes like I'm Eighteen became impassioned pleas of cultural alienation, letting an older genera-

tion know that something very different— and very disturbing— was going on within their kids. At the same time, all-out rockers like School's Out and Under My Wheels offered a taste of the Midwestern metal sensibility that would soon come to dominate the decade.

We were just a bunch of guys from Detroit who loved rock and roll and were trying to get noticed any way we could," said Cooper. "I'd love to say that it was all based on pent-up

hostilities and run-away emotion, and there is no doubt in my mind that represented a great part of it. But there was also a lot of thought and planning involved. I guess you could call it artfully contrived chaos.

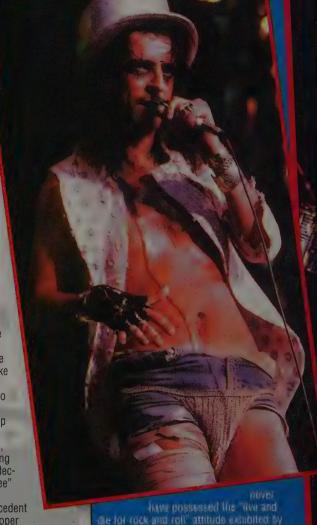
At the heart of it all was a clever gentleman originally known as Vincent Furnier, who rode his Alice Cooper alter-ego to the pinnacle of '70s fame and infamy. Along with his band (originally featuring guitarists Glen Buxton and Michael Bruce), the AC express ran roughshod through spaced-out American rock society, which at the time seemed more attuned to the drug induced hippie vibes put forth by West Coast bands like the Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead than to the caustic, loud and downright scary antics put forth by Alice Cooper. The "plan" worked like a charm, sending the band's singles and albums straight to the top of the charts and cementing the group's live rep (fostered by Cooper's nightly penchant for beheading dolls, brandishing snakes and ending up in an elaborately staged electric chair prop) as a "must see"

concert spectacle. There really wasn't a precedent for what we were doing," Cooper said. "You'd see the arena rock shows at that time— whether it was Zeppelin or Pink Floyd— and there were a lot of lights, and a lot of standing around. We kind of turned everything inside out. We took some of the focus off of the music, and made the whole show into a theatrical production.

Perhaps in light of what passes for "entertainment' in shock rock circles these days, it's kind of hard to imagine that at one time Alice Cooper was the unquestioned King Of Outrage. But back in his early '70s heyday, Cooper and

and a sound that hook the music world by storm. Alice's outland all appearance outraged some and amused others, but sometime most everyone immediately sensed that clothing lunked the heart of a commin-cial beast— a guy who had it all planned out from day one. No, the golf-loving TV-game show

playing Cooper may



Hendrix but through his deft songwriting touch, his cutrageous snowmanship are his skilled business acumen. Cooper emerged as a true rock icon. Without a doubt, his efforts helped open the doors for everyone from Kiss to Motley Crue to Slinkny.

and lows of life.
Today, however, some 35 years after he first
hit the top of the charts with his immedal.





paean to teen angst, Eighteen, Cooper is stillvery much alive and well. In fact, he's still releasing albums on a regular basis (such as 2006's power-packed **Dirty Diamonds**) and During when and if the mood strikes him. Clearly in the 21st Century, the always inventive, continually creative Mr. Cooper has once again releavented himself. No. In hisself done "This album may be a little heavier than the last few things I did," he said. "But I don't think that I've sacrificed very much in going to a heavier sound. The songs are still very solid, which to me has always been the key ingredient to what I've done. Go back and listen to

things from any part of my career, whether it

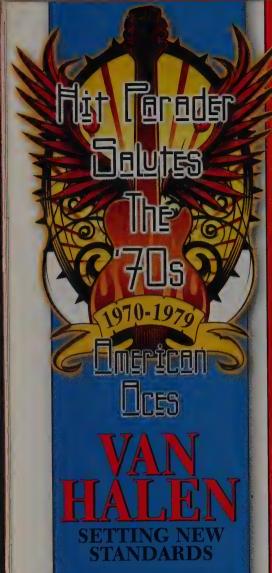
material that

first launched his career so many

unexpected platinum has in the Sos, Cooper hard hitting, yet instantly infectious music has remained his career's lifeline. Mush like his British alter-ago, Ozzy Osbosine. Cooper has lived through the ups and downs of the rind-lifestyle and is all too willing to tell anyone who it listen that to no one's surprise. The "ups" are a hell of a lot better.

I do make music to make fairs that y.

I do make mesic to make hits Hag, y, a semitted. Any musician who doesn't really isn't being fair to remself or to the tern. But long ago stopped trying to higher out what the people wanted. I just decided to do what I like and hoped that they liked it to: " [hink I've been right name offen than not.



nyone who saw it will never forget it. The year was 1979, and Van Halen was touring North America as the opening act for Black Sabbath. It was far from a well-kept secret that the Sabs were having a tough go of it with internal problems threatening to tear the band asunder—and Indeed, vocalist Ozzy Osbourne was to leave the band within months. But the young upstarts in VH saw Sabbath's problems as their big opportunity to establish their stellar credentials, and night in and night-out they put on the shows of their lives—high-stakes, energy-packed 40 minute showcases that literally and figuratively blew Sabbath off the stage. It was electric, it was magnetic, it was nothing short of assounding. Van Halen had arrived.

Eddle Van Halen vividly remembers that tour, and he also clearly recalls that when his band's self-titled debut album emerged in 1978 he had no idea how the rock public might react to it. Up to that time the group had more or less lived and performed in the fish bowl known as Los Angeles— a place where they had become the unquestioned kings of the Sunset Strip.

Emerging in the wake of the El Lay

easy listening" sound epitomized by the likes of the Eagles and Linda Ronstadt, Van Halen's guitar-heavy, highly theatrical style hit the West Coast like a sucker punch to the chin. Everyone was bowled over; some by the "shocking" energy this band presented, others by the sheer ecstasy of a band that seemed to revel in the pure joy of rock and roll. Still, despite their local acclaim, and their growing buzz on the international rock underground, Eddie still wasn't sure how his band's blitzkrieg approach would go over in the still conservative musical tides of the Who knew?" he said with a now-know-

late '70s.

"Who knew?" he said with a now-knowing smile. "Back then all we wanted to do was get on stage and have a good time. We were as surprised as anyone when that record came out and started to do so well. Our big goal at that time was just to sell enough records to make another one— and maybe get a world tour out of it eventually. I guess we weren't that interested in the money or the fame, all we wanted to do was make sure the party we were having would

Reep on going."
Party, indeed! Over the ensuing years Van Halen was to establish itself as the ultimate rock and roll party band. Here was a group that destroyed dressing rooms because they found brown M&M's backstage, and cut a swath through groupieville unmatched by any other band this side of Led Zeppelin. With original vocalist David Lee Roth leading the way, guitarist Edward, his drum bashing brother Alex and ever-ready bassist Michael Anthony quickly changed the very fabric of contemporary rock and roll. Blending their unmatched instrumental dexterity with Roth's Borscht Belt sense of

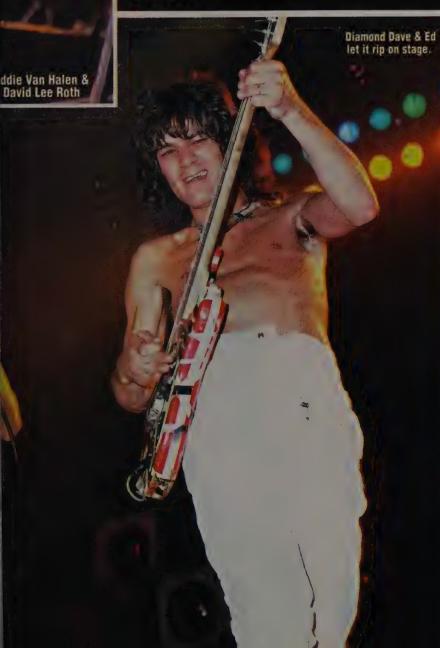


humor and blond good looks, Van Halen helped revitalize the American hard rock form. Through their ground-breaking efforts, they proved once and for all that a band didn't have to depend on simplistic three-chord riffs (though many of VH's best songs did) or banal lyrics (though many of VH's best songs did) or studio gimmickry (though many of VH's best songs did) in order to make it to the top. These guys just went out there, plugged in their instruments and walled away; in the process becoming the single most successful American hard rock band of their era.

"I can guarantee you that in the beginning

"I can guarantee you that in the beginning the last thought on any of our minds was making a musical statement that was going to last a long time." Edward VH declared. "Probably our biggest goal was to make

"We were as surprised as anyone when that first record came out and started to do so well."



sure that backstage was well stocked in every way and that we got to meet as many fans as possible after the show. It was all just a great time, and that fun came across in the music. It certainly wasn't an act, because we were living the kind of life we were singing about 24 hours a day."

The party-all-night act worked for a long

time. Van Halen scored a continual streak of chart-topping albums including Van Halen, Van Halen II and Women And Children First. At the same time, Edward was being hailed far-and-wide as the greatest guitarist of his generation, and the single most influential axe master since Jum Hendrix. But, unfortunately, as if so often the case with bands that get it all handed to them on a silver platter, the wheels soon began to some all the VH rock and roll express. The band's fondness for partying led to rumored substance problems for both Van Halen brothers, and Roth began believing his own press hype- young so far as to start thinking that he was, in fact pigger than the band. A spill was inevitable and by the lime their landmark lise 1984 was released, word hit the street that not only was Roth planning on doing a solo lisc, but he was thinking about pursuing a movie career as well. Roth tried to blame his moves on the VH brothers being "too. unpredictable" - the brothers blamed Roth for being "selfish". By 1985 Roth was out and veteran rocker Sammy Hagar was in and by 1986 the band found itself back at the top of the rock pile with their biggest selling album ever

"I know what's going happen," Noth said shortly after the split. Ten years from now, when I'm resting on a beach somewhere enjlying myself, the phone is goonzing. It'll be Ed asking me if I want to come back and do one more tour with the band. You know what I'm going do when that happens? I'm just politely going say. Ed.

Well, much was to happen within VH nefore that call from Edward to beachnomber Dave actually did occur some 12 years after their initial split— it resulted in the band's now-legendary get-together for the 1998 MTV Music Awards. During the intervening dizen years van Halen wem on to create bigger if not necessarily better things. While many would agree that the band's post Roth albums, including such multi-platinum smashes as OU812, 5150 and Balance never came close to attaining the youthful hell-bent exuberance of their earlier efforts, those same critics would agree that the band did little to diminish their reputation as the finest American rock band ever.

Now, nearly 30 years after they first made their mark on the rock and roll land scape, these eternal 'boys of summer' remain one of the seminal forces in hard rock history. And whether or not their much-discussed 'reunion' tour with Diamond Dave leads to bigger and better things (including a rumored new album), there's no denying the incredible impact their look, sound and style continue to exert on the entire rock and roll world.



There was a brief but magical moment in metal time back in 1976 when Ted Nugent bound himself the single most famous face in the hard rock world. His nift powered, sing-along anthem Cat Scratch Fever was pervasive, and the image of this fast-taking, long-haired, wild eyed Motor City Madman—clad in a foin cloth and little else—filled rock publications from London to Los Angeles. And when Terrible Ted hit the four trail—as he did for an average of 300 days a year throughout that decade fans were treated to a speciacle that only this pure rock and rolf "animal" could preduce. Part wild-west spectacle and part side-show attraction, the Nuge on stage would swing from the rafters like Tarzan, and shoot flaming arrows at imaginary targets—while never missing a lick on his over-sized guitar. It was theater, cornedy and a hard rock show all rolled into one—and Nugent leved every second of it.

Nugent leved every second of it.

That's what happens when a red-blooded American male lets his hormones run wild," be said. "There were no drugs and ro alcohol involved—those just inhibit your mind and body. I was working on pure Nugent-styled adrenaline.

Obviously, the Nuge has aways been one of rock's most outspoken and outrageous personalties. Got a topic? Just ask this Michigan native about it and you're liable to end up with a 20-minute discourse on the subject. World peace? You *really* want to know Terrible Ted's solution? Welfare? You might not

like what the man has to say. Gun control? Don't get him started. Yup, ol' Ted is certainly a free thinker, someone who sure as hell doesn't give a damn about "political correctness", a man whose views make Rush Limbaugh's look downright liberal! Yet somehow, despite being the antithesis of the standard quasi-radical, loyal liberal rock psycho babble, Nugent has managed to survive and prosper in the rock wars for the better part of 40 years. Unquestionably, this gun-toting, bow-shooting rock and roll wildman, has always done it his way.

"People know what I stand for; they're interested in hearing about my opinions on hunting, conservation and politics as well as on rock and roll," he said. "I'm being called to speak at youth organizations all across the country. I also speak at young lawyers and law enforcement conventions. I've also been doing my own radio show. I'm the best—nobody can touch me and when the opposition even dares to say a word, I make them do a breast

stroke in their own vomit."

Certainly Nugent has never been one to suffer from lack of ego. In fact, his strong opinions on everything from war to peace - and just about everything in between— have managed to enrage just about everyone within earshot. But that's fine with Ted. Love 'em or hate 'em, the only thing he can't stand is when somebody ignores him. And let's face it; the guy does have much to brag about... including half-a-dozen platinum albums and an image that has become one of the most recognizable in rock history. But as we all can plainly see, there's more to this unique personality than just rock and roll. This is truly a man for all seasons— hunting seasons, that is! It's great when someone can turn his hobbies into his career, and in the case of Nugent, he's done it more than once. Aside from his legendary rock and roll career, his success as a hunter has opened up countless new business opportunities for this Detroit native.

"One of the things I'm very proud of was hosting a Ted Nugent: Spirit Of The Wild series for PBS stations throughout the Midwest a few years ago," he said. "I guarantee, my friends, that it set new records nationwide for pledged income to PBS. The show featured four of my TV specials—The Hunting Lifestyle, A Day In The Life of the Ted Nugent Ranch, A Father and Son Hunting in Quebec, Canada, and The Ultimate Beast Nugent Tales. Before long I'm going to be a five-headed media monster that no one will be able to touch."

Still, when all is said and done, it is music that has always played the central role in Nugent's life. The hunting is great, the radio and TV exposure is fun, but there's still nothing quite like slipping on a guitar, plugging it into a mountain of amps, and then attacking 10,000 rabid fans with the same ferocity with which he attacks a grizzly bear. And as he showed during his run last year on MTV's Supergroup— where he formed an "instant band" with the likes of Scott lan and Jason Bonham— as well as on his

latest album, **Love Grenade**, the Huge Nuge has proven that he is still very much a pure-bred, one-of-a-kind rock and roll beast.

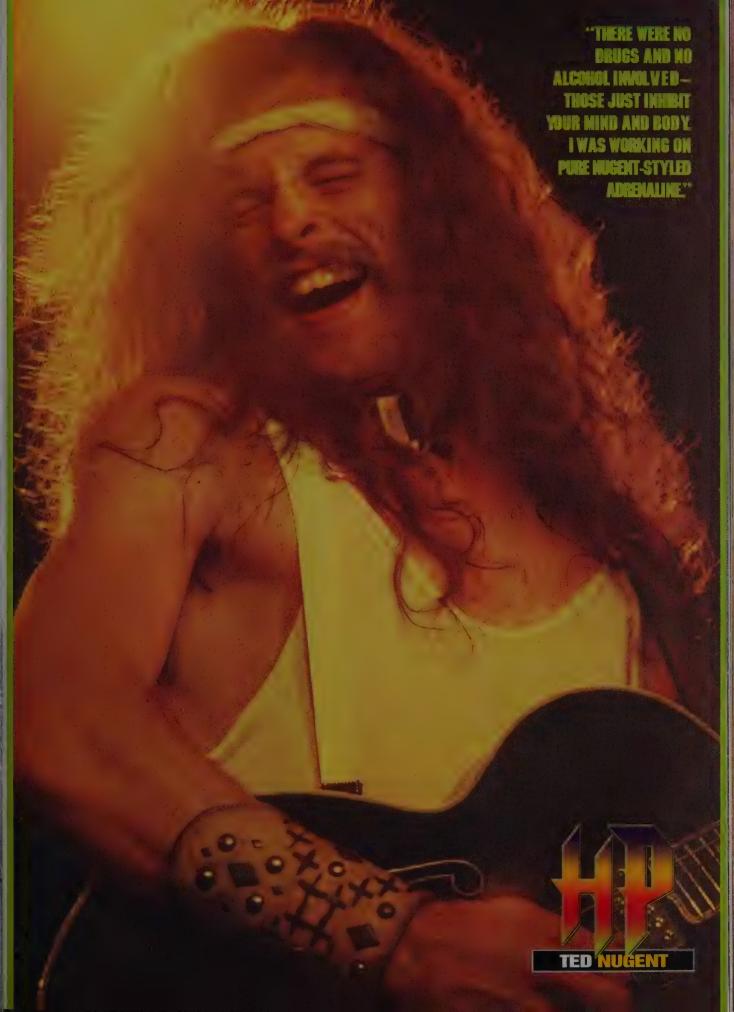
"The music I make is a manifesto with gusto," he said. "No question about it. I realize now that when I fought the hardest back in the '70s to not let anyone in the recording procedure compromise my guitar sounds, those were my biggest records. That threatening rumble is the gist of everything that is Nugent music, and that's what is still going to be projected beyond your wildest dreams on any new music I make."

How can a guy who's recorded more than 30 albums during his lengthy career (including stints with everyone from '60s acid rockers, the Amboy Dukes, to '80s hair farmers. Damn Yankees), possibly still be so revved, so stoked, so totally overthe-top about his music at this stage of his life? Well, in all honesty, Ted still thinks *every* album he records is going to be the one that'll tilt the planet just a bit more off its axis.

'Upon reviewing my career, I realize unequivocally that the most exciting music and my favorite stuff happens to coincide with my biggest selling records," he said "You know why? Because it wasn't produced, it was revered. If you have reverence for the sonic and the thrust of your creation musi-cally, then you'll make sure that the drums sound like the drums you play in a garage, you will make sure that the guitar sounds like the guitar you play in a smoky, short-skirt, filth-ridden club. And these sounds are what separate my successful selling records from my less successful selling records. So I have discovered the system by which not to process the instrumentation, but to enhance the guttural level of the instrumentation. In other words, the guitar has got to sound like a real guitar, not some electronic thing. You've got to hear it work, you've got to hear the metal strings, you've got to hear the pick hitting it, you've got to actually be able to hear the flesh against the strings when you're playing them. That's what my music is about.'

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PHOTO: FRANK WHITE





omelimes it's a sad twist of rock and roll fate that the true innovators get lost amid the yellowing pages of music history. Sometimes those brave souls that first reach for a lofty creative plateau must wait for others to follow in their wake before socety begins to recognize their true accomplishments. And sometimes such recognition never comes.... no matter how much respect those in The Know may choose to send their way.

For the most part, such was the story of Montrose, one of the truty planeering forces in American hard rock. It could well be argued—by those that argue such things—that without the ground-breaking early 70s efforts of quitarist Ronnie Montrose and his crew, there might never have been a band like Van Halen, who hit the scene runnin' some six years later. Of course, the fact that Montrose's original vocal-ist was a gent named Sammy Hagarwho a decade after leaving Montrose would enjoy a reasonable degree of acclaim fronting that said-same VHthe idea that Ted Templeman— the man responsible for creating the Van Halen "sound" on that band's first albums— also just-so-happened to produce Montrose's initial discs indeed, perhaps it isn't going out on a limb too far to surmise that the entire West Coast Metal Explosion that

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rocked the world throughout the '80s may have been little more than a pipe dream without the ground-breaking work supplied by this California-based unit.

"I've heard people make those comparisons," Montrose said. "But I don't really know how true they are. If those early albums helped influence some kids who may have followed us, then I take great pride in that. But we never set out to be pioneers... only to be the best band we could be.

The fact is, when we speak of Montrose in their role as ground-breaking pioneers of the hard rock world, we're referring to only the band's first two albums, 1973's Montrose and 1974's Paper Money. After that point Hagar spilt to launch what would quickly prove to be a highly successful decade-long solo career, while the band would continue to rock on - with increasingly less power and prestige-with a succession of other vocalists. But, oh, what an impact those first two discs would make upon an unsuspecting rock world! At a time when progressive rock was running wild, and even the era's most

notable heavy metal bands were often presenting long, drawn-out album opuses, the short, fast, intense bursts of pure hard rock emotion that filled such Montrose tunes as Rock Candy, Bad Motor Scooter and 1 Got the Fire seemed to exude the energy of a two-year old trapped amid the residents of an old age home.

"In retrospect it's easy to see the lineal link between Montrose and a whole legion of American-styled rock acts that followed, including Kiss and Van Halen," said an East Coast radio personality. "On one hand you had bands like Yes, Emerson Lake & Palmer and Led Zeppelin who were routinely putting 8 minute songs on albums... or creating halfhour single song monstrosities on stage. Then along came Montrose, which featured an almost AM-radio philosophygreat, guitar-driven songs that rarely hit the four minute mark. That created a style of American hard rock that a ton of bands have followed over the years.'

It wasn't as if his band's first two historic albums represented Ronnie Montrose's initial taste of acclaim. After all, he had appeared on Van Morrison's brilliant 1971 disc Tupelo Honeywhere he first encountered Templeman, who was at that album's production helm. He also was a charter member of the Edgar

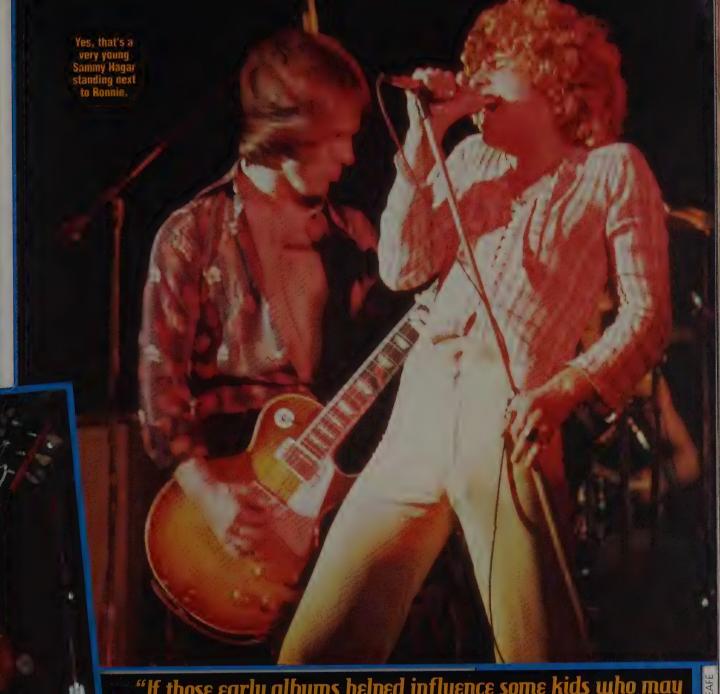
PHOTO: BOB LEAFE

Winter Group, whose Montrose-driven single, Free Ride, was one of the biggest songs of 1972. In fact, it was his exposure within Edgar Winter that first gave him to confidence to break away and launch a band of his own. Joining together with a then littleknown Hagar, drummer Denny Carmassi and bassist Bill Church (the later of whom he had met during those Tupelo Honey sessions) Montrose quickly landed a record deal and produced their self-titled debut disc within six months of first joining forces.

The album received immediate media focus and radio attention. But while the media generally praised it, and fans rallied to its support, the disc never achieved the kind of sales recognition it perhaps deserved. None-the-less, a heavy road regimen soon commenced which saw Montrose tour the face of North America non-stop for most of the next year. Almost amazingly, they found time amid the road trekking to again join forces with Templeman to produce Paper Money, which emerged, in true







"If those early albums helped influence some kids who may have followed us, then I take great pride in that."

style, only a year after their first album had hit the streets.

"That's the way bands worked back then," Hagar said.
"You'd put an album out and then hit the road. There wasn't MTV or national radio that could help break an album right away. You needed to do it market by market, playing live, and hoping that radio picked up on your

single. It was hard work... but it was also a lot of fun."

Montrose's original run would consist of four albums, including 1975's Warner Brothers Presents Montrose and 1976's Jump On It (both featuring vocalist Bob James), before the band's creative momentum began to run out of steam. They would reform in 1987 to record Mean—which was a rather blatant attempt to latch on to the then-burgeoning hard rock scene which, rather ironically, they helped create. But that album failed to generate any significant degree of fan or media interest.

However, because of the fact that Hagar always held his early association with Montrose near and dear to his heart (he's continued to perform Bad Motor Scoular on stage throughout his solo career), a mini-reunion of original Montrose members has occurred from time-to-time. First, back in 1997, Hagar invited that lineup to perform Leaving the Warmth of the Womb on his Marching to Mars album. Then, as recently as 2005, he has on occasion brought the band members on stage will him for an encore jam— which invariably brings the show to a rousing cumax.

"There's an energy when we all get together that really special," Hagar said. "Ronnie is a great guitarist, and I've had Denny in my solo bands for years. It's great when we can all get together... everyone has a good time."

here was a moment in the mid-'80s when Motley Crue was unquestionably the biggest, most important band in the hard rock world. While cynics sneered at their overtly sexist, outwardly hedonistic, blatantly simplistic style, there was no doubt that the Crue had hit a responsive nerve within the teen-age masses of the world. Their sing-along metal anthems, their pretty-boy good looks and their bad boy image helped foster the notion that the Motley men were the true modern-day metal warriors, a group capable of taking the hard rock form to never-before imagined heights. To some extent this rhetoric proved true—such Crue discs as Dr. Feelgood and Theater Of Pain shot Nikki Sixx, Mick Mars, Vince Neil and Tommy Lee to the pinnacle of rock stardom—though some critics remained unconvinced of the band's lasting impact upon the rock form.

"We were never a band designed for the media," Sixx said. "We were there for the kids— the fans that had the same three minute attention span

Whether he wants to admit it or not, Nikki Sixx was, is and will always be Motley Crue's main man. While Sixx has continually alluded to the fact that the Crue is a four-man" brotherhood" where no one is really the Feelgood sold a combined total of over 30 million albums world-wide. But that was only a part of the Crue's mystique. Their off-stage reputation for fighting and loving their way across the continents struck a responsive nerve within millionssome longing to live the Crue Lifestyle, others wanting to permanently bury the band in the black hole of oblivion. But no matter how hard those critics tried, the Crue just kept getting bigger and bigger. Their tales of mass groupie gropes and of debauchery of every style and fashion soon started attracting as much mainstream media attention as their music, and for many, Motley Crue became synonymous with the wild and wicked lifestyle of the '80s.

Despite all their infamous acclaim, however, Sixx remained something of a rock and roll purist. The more people focused attention on the group's lascivious lifestyle, the more he wanted to prove his band's artistic merit. By the time the '90s dawned. Sixx sensed that a new and radically different musical sensibility has emerged, and he moved to take the band in a radical new direction. Viewing frontman Neil as a "limiting factor" who could only handle the band's simple, party-hearty tunes, he fired the singer, adding new voice John Corabi in time to record the band's self-titled 1993 release. Rather than accepting the move, the Crue's still loval following rebelled, feeling that this musical "brotherhood", one of the few groups in rock history where every band member was as equally famous as the other, was forever damaged. They may have been right.

By 1996 Neil (whose own solo career was quickly going down the toilet after two poorly selling discs), was back in the fold, just in time to record Generation Swine- a disc that pleasantly surprised some of the group's long-time supporters while adding a few new "recruits" to the band's musical army. Soon after, the Crue's off-stage activities once again began to usurp

their on-stage magic. This time the center of attention was Tommy Lee, who ended up doing a six-month stretch in prison following a fight with his on-again. off-again wife, bodacious actress Pamela Anderson. In fact, after touring with the band on their '97/'98 road outing, Tommy decided to leave the Crue prior to the

band on their '97/'98 road outing, Tommy decided to leave the Crue prior to the start of their summer of '99 tour in order launch a solo career and to spend more time with his family, which also included two young sons.

For the next five years it was basically a hit-and-miss existence for the Crue. But some how, some way it seemed inevitable that these ultimate West Coast Wildmen, the *ultimate* '80s band, would return— and be bigger, badder and more successful than ever! Against all odds, that's exactly what happened in 2005, when their **Red, White & Crue** tour rocked the world to the tune of packed arenas from Albany to Anaheim. Despite Mars' lingering health problems, and the war of words that erupted between Lee and Neil, the Crue rocked on as only they could—bringing in a new generation of fans in the process.

"A band like Motley Crue was designed to hit hard and burn out fast," the bassist said. "I never expected us to last five years—let alone ten or 20.

Despite whatever current situation the group may find themselves in, one should never forget the role that Motley Crue played in shaping

the style, look and attitude of America during the '80s. While the band members may be better known today for marrying TV stars and Playboy centerfolds, that shouldn't detract from the documented fact that for one brief, shining moment in time Motley Crue were rock and roll.

"I'll always be proud of what we've accomplished," Sixx said. 'Nobody else did it like we did."

Malever us; Motley Crue is an ever-changing thing."

boss, the fact that he is the group's principle songwriter and main spokesperson support the claim that Motley could never have survived for 25 years without Sixx' loving care. Now, with the band returning to the very pinnacle of fan acclaim following their incredibly successful Red, White & Crue "reunuion" tour run, the focus again is squarely on Mr. Sixx. But the Nikki of 2006 is far different than the rocker of 1986. Now married (and divorced) with children, and free of drugs and drink. Sixx is a cool, sober rocker who knows exactly what buttons to push in order to keep the Crue squarely in the public eye... or at least in a hurrican's eye.

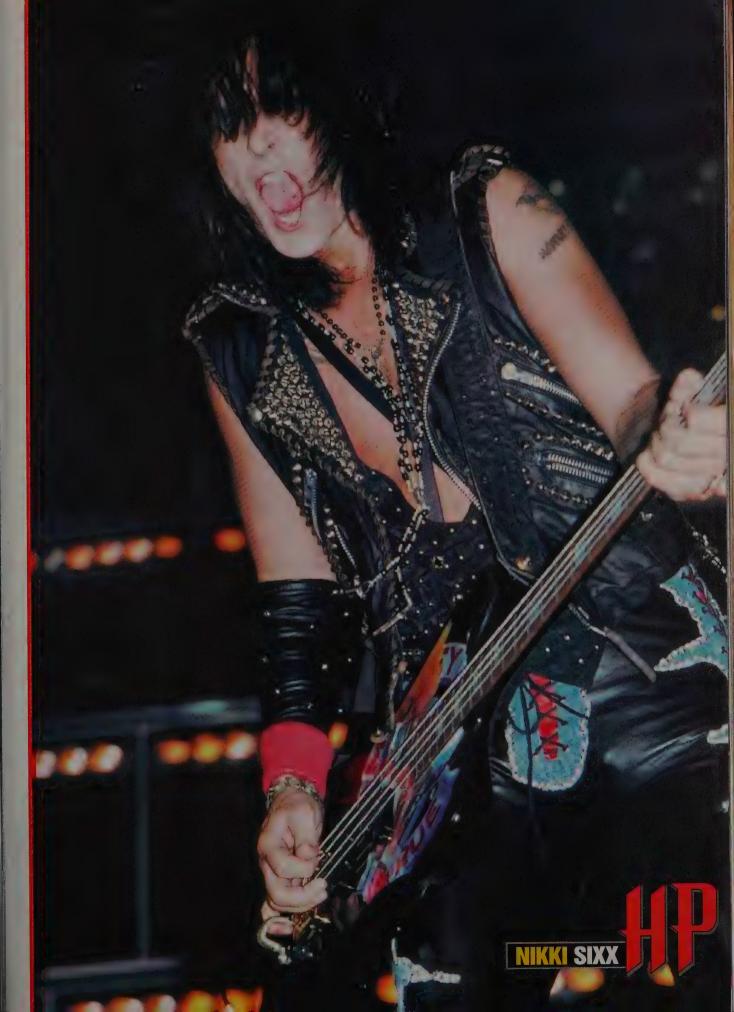
'We've never tried to fit into any category," he said. "So whatever legacy we've created is just being us. Motley Crue is an ever-changing thing. I don't think anyone who's really followed our career over the years could ever accurately predict what we were going to do next. They couldn't because usually we didn't know. We've just kept doing things the Motley Way."

Doing thing the "Motley Way" has been this band's primary call-to-arms virtually from Day One. Almost as soon as their debut album, Too Fast For Love, had been released back in 1983. Motley Crue established themselves as a band that would either instantly crash in flames, or revolutionize the American hard rock scene. Though many predicted dire consequences for the band, stating that they displayed minimal musical talent and that the impact of their on-stage theatrics would quickly wear thin, it soon became evident that the Crue was destined to almost single-handedly turn their home town of L.A. into the center of the '80s rock world. Underneath their mounds of hair, frightful stage makeup and artfully ragged clothes, lurked the heart of true rock and roll mercenaries—guys that would do just about anything in order to make it to the top.

"I don't know if we have ever really been understood by the people who have tried to write about us." Sixx said. "The people who did understand us were the kids who bought the records and came to the shows.

Sixx certainly understood his following. Over a seven-year period from 1983 through 1989, Motley Crue was the most successful and controversial band in the world. Such albums as Shout At The Devil, Theater Of Pain and Dr.

At last count, between Tommy, Nikki and Vince, they've married FOUR **Playboy Playmates...** and divorced three of them





f all the West Coast bands to emerge in the early '80s, Ratt initially seemed perhaps the least likely to succeed. After all, for every check they had in the "plus" column, they seemed to have just as many in the "negative" file. In Stephen Pearcy they possessed a singer second only to perhaps Motley Crue's Vince Neil in terms of limited vocal range. In Warren DeMartini they showcased a "guitar god" who, despite his obvious talents, displayed neither the netherworldly flash of Dokken's George Lynch or the stage panache of Ozzy's Jake E. Lee. And in Bobby Blotzer they had a drummer who frequently seemed more interested in partaking of the backstage buffet table than pounding his skins with reckless abandon.

At times I guess we made ourselves targets, and that was fine with us." Pearcy said. "Back then all we wanted to do was have some fun and make some music- and we did both. We weren't there to compete with anyone else in terms of money or success. And we never really set our sights on making it big-though we certainly didn't complain when that happened. It was all just a big party for us. It was Ratt & Roll... a party that should never stop!"

While they may have partied with the best of 'em, the fact was that Ratt often got by on their attitude (and their often superlative song craftsmanship) more than anything else. On stage they showed neither the over-the-top theatrics of W.A.S.P. or the pure showmanship of Poison. And on album they failed to strive for either the often lofty musical aspirations of the Crue or the saccharin sweet pop perfectionism of Warrant or Dokken. Still, despite all of their apparent limitations, Ratt made it...and made it BIG!

During the heyday of the West Coast Metal Movement from 1982 through 1987 this quintet (then also featuring guitarist Robbin Crosby and bassist Juan Croucier) managed to sell over 10 million albums and become one of the first superstar acts on the then-burgeoning form known as MTV. The band's memorable video for their breakthrough single, Round And Round, featured an appearance by the legendary comedian Milton Berle, who just-so-happened to be the uncle of their first manager. Those were certainly heady times for Ratt. They may have never been the "Kings" of the Sunset Strip. But if they failed to attain that cultural plateau, these Rockin' Rodents seemed more-than-content with their role as the scene's Crown Princes.

"We never forced anything," Pearcy said. "I think that was one of the keys to our success. Some of the other bands of that time just tried too hard to be outrageous, or be annoying, and grab everyones attention. We played with all of 'em at one time or another, and we learned a lot from what we saw and heard. We were always satisfied just being who and what we were— and that was a pretty damn good rock and roll band."

Even since the end of their '80s glory years, the members of Ratt (in various configurations) have never been shy about their every-nowand-then efforts to once again hoist the band's party hearty banner. Despite the tragic death of Crosby in 2002, the Ratt pack has continued to roll on, releasing the occasional album and undertaking the occasional tour-each of which again remind us what made these guys so much fun to begin with.

Sure, even the best of their songs like Back for More, Lay it Down and Wanted Man had an instant familiarity based more on their threechord basics than their high-flying virtuosity. And even on their best day they may have been the deserving subjects of non-stop media derision. But, hey, when you name yourself after one of the world's least favorite creatures, what do you expect? (By the way, the name Ratt actually sprung from the band's original moniker Mickey Rat, a take-off on that rather well-known Disney cartoon character.)

And these days, while they may be a little older, a little heavier and hopefully a whole lot wiser, the fundamentally simple kinetic appeal of the band's rock and roll attack remains very much the same. Say what you want about them, but Ratt was, is and will always be a band comfortable in their own rock and roll skin. They knew what they did well... and at times they know that they did it as well as anyone ever has.

We can still play, it's really that simple," Pearcy said. "The time away from one another is usually good for us and good for the music

because it allows us to infuse all that we've learned during our time apart into the music. It's always still Ratt, but it's a little different, and maybe even a little

With a history of platinum-coated discs like **Out Of The Cellar, Invasion Of** Your Privacy and Dancin' Undercover, as Ratt continue to occasionally rock on in the 21st Century they certainly have much to live up to. Indeed, perhaps their album legacy is only surpassed by the Crue's as being at the very core of the West Coast Metal Explosion. But these

guys ain't stoopid. They know full well that the glory days of the L.A. scene are now little more than a fast-fading memory, and that many of their fellow Tinsel Town rockers are either fighting for survival on the club scene, or selling used cars in Ensino. But none of that discourages these guys one bit. Sure, they may no longer be on a major label, and they many no longer have millions of fans waiting to pounce on their latest release. But for these timeless rockin' rodents, the mere fact that on occasion they still find time to hang together and make their unique brand of music seems to be more than enough to make them happy. "What happened in the '80s was great," Pearcy said. "But this is

20 years later. The fact is that I'm very proud of what this band has accomplished. The idea that there's still so much interest in us and in our music so many years later

something very timeless about what we do. I guess the bottom line is that a lot of people still want to get out there and have a good time."

The band was originally named Mickey really tells you all you need to know about Ratt. There's Ratt... until some Disney associates got wind of it.





o hard rock band has probably ever been dumped on more unmercifully, subjected to more media and fan abuse, and chided with more outright derision than Poison. Their hip-shaking stage gyrations have been called "bubblegum" and their music has been labeled as "lightweight" and "pointless"— and that has often been by those who like this peroxide blond crew. Through it all these Pennsylvania-cum-California rockers have merely laughed it off, counting the Big Bucks they've earned, and taking solace in the fact that millions of fans around the world have actually attempted to recognize the artistic merit of the band's hard pop approach.

Love 'em for the sheer fun-loving ecstasy presented in such hits as I Want Action, or hate 'em for their overtly sexist Open Up and Say Ahh approach, the fact is that Poison perfectly represented the era from which they emerged. Just as Nirvana's dark, disturbing odes spoke for the troubled souls of the early-'90s, and the wild, theatrical gyrations of Slipknot have hit a responsive nerve within today's rock followers, Poison's brand of see-no-evil, hear-no-evil, good-time rock perfectly reflected the care-free aura that supposedly characterized the late-'80s L.A. rock scene— a scene that was actually quite dark and disturbing in its own drug-filled, sex-abusing way. Emerging as a "second generation" band on that scene, hitting the Sunset Strip clubs just as the likes of Motley Crue and Ratt were moving on to major label superstardom, vocalist Bret Michaels, drummer Rikki Rockett, bassist Bobby Dall and guitarist C.C. DeVille initially had a tough time getting anyone to notice them. The labels weren't sure if this "L.A. metal thing" was actually going to last, and they decided to turn their backs on Poison's

"We had come to L.A. from Pennsylvania with the idea of getting signed." Michaels explained. "But when we got out there, those labels seemed to feel that they already had their 'L.A. band.' So instead of waiting for a major to discover us, we decided to take our fate into our own hands. We started putting out our own flyers advertising our shows, and we started getting ready to record an album-on our own, if necessary."

Just as Poison was getting ready to invest their own money into the recording of their debut disc, Look What The Cat Dragged In, a small West Coast indie label stepped forward offering the grand total of \$23,000 for the band to make that record. While such a sum was a small fraction of what other L.A. groups were then routinely spending on their studio ventures, Poison jumped at the chance, recording the disc in two weeks and having it out on the street less than a month later. From the moment it emerged, that premier disc drew immediate attention—both for the band's infectious, high-energy sound and for the outrageously androgynous pictures of each band member that adorned the album's front cover. It was the L.A. scene of the '80s reaching its logical apex; a high camp, sexually ambiguous romp that promised plenty of high-speed action, and delivered on all counts.

We used the makeup just to get noticed," Michaels explained. "We quickly realized that it was going to really limit us as far as where we could go musically in the future. But we also realized that if we hadn't done something to get noticed at that point in our career, there wouldn't be a future. That album did its job. We had taken a little money and made a great record, and as soon as it came out the majors started knocking on our door.'

Look What The Cat Dragged In was quickly picked up by a major and re-released, much to the consternation of the upper-crust rock media— and to the delight of fans everywhere. The disc proceeded to sell over two million copies, making Poison the Toast Of The Coast, and one of the most recognizable bands in the world. While there was always a bit of in-fighting between the group's members, for the most part, Poison came across as just a bunch of fun-seeking musical brothers who didn't give a damn that nobody thought they could play a lick.

By the time the band's second album, Open Up And Say Ahh..., was released, Poison had become accepted for being exactly what they were—a band capable of producing easily digestible rock fare and putting on a dynamic, if somewhat predictable, stage show. This time around the pancake makeup and eyeliner was gone, replaced by a slightly more mature musical approach that came across as a blatant attempt to garner more positive reviews. To some extent it worked. Media types who had hated Poison the first time around began to acknowledge that at least the group had the gumption to consider trying something a little different. Poison was determined to stick around, and not be merely the "one

e realized that if we hadn't done nething to get noticed at that point reer, there wouldn't be a future

hit wonders" that many had predicted would be their fate. In fact, by the time their next release, Flesh & Blood, came out, Poison had actually evolved into a "serious" rock act, one that was capable of producing thought-provoking power-ballad odes like Every

Rose Has Its Thorn as well as their trademark pop ditties.
"We had been exposed to a lot more by then, and we had begun to grow up," Michaels said. "We weren't just four guys who were willing to do anything to get noticed. We had developed the confidence to believe that we had something interesting to say as well as a fun way of saying it

As almost always seems to be the case with a band that sees its career skyrocket so quickly, problems began to arise within Poison soon after their third album was released. While the band hit the road to produce their next disc, the in-concert Swallow This Live, it was no secret that DeVille's drug problems had become rampant, and that a parting of ways was virtually inevitable. For much of the next decade Poison would rock on with a variety of guitarist— while never coming close to recapturing the sound or spirit that had made them a late '80s "hair metal" sensation. But with DeVille's return in 2001— after a tempestuous personal battle— in time to record the 2003 disc Hollyweird, the band's original lineup and original spirit seemed to once again spring to life. And as they cele-

brate the 20th Anniversary of their debut disc's release in 2006, one simple, undeniable fact has became abundantly clear-Poison just isn't

going away.

We're ready to make our statement for this era," Michaels said. "If anyone thinks Poison's time has passed they're obviously very

ID YOU KNOW: Bret dated Pamela

Anderson years before she married Tommy Lee. She supposedly kept a "life size" photo of his private parts in her wallet

Motley-meets-Kiss stylings.



GUNS N' ROSES BLOOD & THUNDER

If ever there was a "shooting star" tearing through the hard rock stratosphere, it was Guns N' Roses. While the band still exists today under the not-so-steady hand of vocalist Axl Rose, this West Coast unit's heyday lasted for barely four years from the late '80s through the early '90s... but what a four year period it was! From the moment the band—then comprised of Rose, guitarist Slash, guitarist Izzy Stradlin, bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Steven Adler—hit the scene runnin' with their legendary debut disc, **Appetite For Destruction**, they caused a tornado of controversy and chaos the likes of which have rarely been seen before... or since.

But the intense heat generated by G N' R's actions and inactions

But the intense heat generated by G N' R's actions and inactions caused friction not only within the rock world, but

were canned by the mercurial Rose) until by 1996 none of the

for Rose to *finally* release the long-overdue **Chinese Democracy**,

at an all-time high. None of us, however, should hold our breath

"At one point I hadn't spoken to AxI in almost ten years," Slash said. "I mean, what was there to say? I know I'm very happy with

Back at the peak of their artistic and commercial powers in the

original band— aside from Axl— were left. As the world waits

and as Slash and Duff light up the rock skies once again with Velvet Revolver, talk concerning a possible Guns reunion stands

where my life is right now. I hope he can say the same.

within the band itself.

early '90s it probably would have made the members of this legendary unit laugh out loud to be told that a decade-and-a-half later they'd be viewed as one of the most important and influential bands in hard rock history. It most likely would have amused them to be informed that despite the fact that they'd record only one truly classic disc, that they'd be ranked among the most hallowed names in metal annals. But that's just the way it was, is and will always be for GN'R— laughing in the face of controversy, instability and disaster.

"We took the music very seriously, but perhaps we didn't take anything else seriously enough," Slash said. "But hopefully you can learn from your mistakes."

Mistake or not, just mentioning Guns N' Roses to a generation of fans is enough to set off a wide range of conflicting emotions. To some, these quintessential L.A. wildmen were the ultimate Hollywood vampires, a band that lived by night, and broke every rule in the book. To others, they'll forever remain the greatest band ever produced by the notorious West Coast Metal Explosion of the '80s. Either way, few bands can ever match the legacy this wild n' crazy unit created during their notorious early '90s heyday.

The fact of the matter is that Guns N' Roses were never particularly comfortable with the notion of merely existing on the rock and roll scene. They were content with— and at times seemingly committed to— the age-old axiom of living fast... and dying young. It was their intent to hit the music world like a run-away freight train, an uncontrollable force ready, willing and able to blast asunder everything— and everyone— unlucky enough to be standing

in their path.

For these guys rock and roll wasn't a musical form as much as it was a lifestyle, a statement of purpose consisting equally of all-night parties, bloody street brawls and an endless stream of wine, women and song. At a time when the rock universe was growing almost jaded with the air-brained, party-hearty rockers who seemed to comprise the entirety of the El Lay music orb, Guns N' Roses proved that those other guys had only been pretenders—

that they were the only true contenders for the title of hard rock's most dangerous band.

"It was never an act, we were what we were," Slash explained. "We were just a bunch of guys who were used to living on the



waiting for it to happen.



queen of noise

ames Brown once proudly sang "It's a man's, man's, man's, man's world." And who are we to disagree with the Godfather of Soul? Certainly in the heavy metal world of the '80s, women were often reduced to playing the roles of groupies, video sex objects, stage adornments, or in the case of Whitesnake, car hood ornaments. It was in this misogynistic 'men's club' scene that Lita Ford stood tall— a beautiful blonde temptress that had all the boys drooling... and who had the musical goods to back it all up. Throughout that decade she went toe-to-toe with her hard rockin' male compatriots, never giving an inch while never sacrificing one iota of her femininity. On a series of albums like Stiletto, Dangerous Curves and the platinumselling Lita, Ford proved once and for all that you didn't actually need balls to play the heavy metal game.

"I just make music that I'm happy with," she told us a few years ago. "I've never tried to make some sort of social statement with my music. I like it, and a lot of fans like it. That's really the

important thing. I've never

was a club headliner or an arena opening act.

"I've always said that when I'm on stage, I'm in control," she said. "Maybe it's the only time in my life when I am in total control, and I like it. I do get off on the looks I get from the guys. But more than anything else, I get off on plugging in my guitar and kicking some ass! To be honest, I don't think I've ever gotten enough credit as a guitarist. I know I'm good. That's what I still get the biggest kick from. I enjoy singing, and I like writing and recording, but getting on stage with my guitar is still the ultimate for me.

Following the somewhat disappointing commercial reaction afforded both her first solo effort, and its follow-up 1984's Dancin' On The Edge, Ford decided to take a step back and reconsider her options. While she was still making a nice living on the road, her failure to record a significant disc ticked her off to no end. For the next four years she plotted. planned and played... until she had completed work on her "masterpiece"... Lita. Having signed on with manager Sharon Osbourne, she was able to hook up with the inimitable Ozzy to record the break out single Close My Eves Forever, which while showing a somewhat softer

side of the Ford musical persona proved to be the smash hit she had been seeking for so long.

"That album did show a different side of me," she said. "But some people forget that the first hit from Lita was Kiss Me Deadly, which was certainly a hard rocker. I enjoyed the success of that album because it represented the culmination of so many years of hard work. You know, it's true what they

say; when you've had a little bitterness in your life, you appreciate the

While she was beginning to make waves with her music, her offstage activities were drawing an almost equal amount of attention from the rock press. Her long relationship with Motley Crue's Nikki Sixx had drawn to a painful close, and Lita was soon linked to a variety of topto be part of the all-girl group, the Runaways. Indeed, it was Lita's burn- shelf rockers, including Black Sabbath's Tony lommi. But it turned out to be W.A.S.P.'s wild-man guitarist Chris Holmes that Ford finally married for what proved to be a brief but tempestuous time in the late-'80s. Since then, she has remarried and had two children, and while her music career has been totally silent since the mid-'90s, the stand that Lita Ford made in the '80s has proven to be one of the most memorable in the high-wire profile of the heavy metal form.

"I'm proud of everything that I accomplished," she said in the early '90s. "I never really sat back and said, 'Hey, I'm a woman trying to make it among all these men.' I tended to enjoy being different. But it wasn't

always easy. I've always had a little

stage fright, which is why I used to take a swig of Jack Daniels before going out

- anymore. I've given up drinking because it's better for me and much better for my voice to be sober.
- Thankfully the fans have given me the kind of security I need to go out there without any crutches.

ve never tried to make some social statement with my mu

been one of those people who's happy when they feel they've made a great record only to find out that it didn't sell. I've always liked selling records. Most of my favorite bands have also been very successful. Being a cult hero is great- it's just _ sweetness that much more.

never been one of my goals."

From the very beginning of her career, Ford's ambitions seemed to match her talent. In the mid-'70s, while still in her teens, she was plucked out of Los Angeles' obscurity by infamous producer Kim Fowley ing lead runs and bulldog determination that kept that band going through some tough times. But when the Runaways finally fell apart in 1979 (with bandmate Joan Jett enjoying the first blush of solo success) it inspired Ford to stick to her guns and play the music she believed in. At a time when so many of her compatriots - both girls and guyswere then attempting to score big by producing a watered-down, musicfor-the-masses rock sound, Lita was determined to "keep it real.

'I didn't want to be a pop star, I wanted to be like Ritchie Blackmore," she said, alluding to the Deep Purple axe master who served as one of her primary influences. "I knew I could play guitar, and I didn't see any reason that I had to tone down anything-my image or

my music- in order to get noticed.

She was right! After losing a little bit of her Runaways-era "baby fat" and lightening up her hair color a notch or two, by the time her first solo . there. I'm not doing that album. Out For Blood, emerged in 1983 (a disc that almost got "banned" prior to its release for its supposedly "suggestive" cover), Ford had been transformed into a true sex goddess-the Queen of Noise who could turn on all the boys with both her fetching good looks and her rock-yer-ass-off sound. While that first album didn't prove to be a cosmic hit, it established Ford as a potent solo performer and allowed her to go on the road where her on-stage charisma and over-the-top sixstring excursions drew standing ovations every night— whether she

YOU KNOW: Lita cites Deep **Purple axe master** Ritchie Blackmore as her primary guitar influence.



Of all the platinum-coated, Los Angeles-based, '80s-era bands Dokken stood alone. Yeah, they may have fouffed their hair a little bit too much, and they wore leather pants that were a might too tight, but at the heart of the Dokken hit machine was always a rock-solid musical foundation that no other West Coast band (at least this side of Van Halen) could match. In guitarist George Lynch, the group had a fleet-fingered fret master, in drummer Mick Brown an iron-fisted rhythm machine, in bassist Jeff Pilson a true-blue beat keeper and in vocalist Don Dokken a guy who at least knew his limitations. While L.A.

haps let their one golden opportunity for fame and fortune slip through their fingers back in '88, some tentative phone calls were made with the thought of trying to rekindle the original Dokken spark before it was too late— if it wasn't already.

"We had stayed in touch— more or less," Pilson explained. "I had talked to Don quite often, just to see how things were going, and George and I had always stayed in touch. Then it happened that Don and I got together to write some new songs, and pretty soon we called up Mick to play some drums. The last guy aboard was George, who didn't join us until he had heard the demos we had completed. He liked what he heard, so all of a sudden Dokken was back together again. Soon after that, we had an

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

"The tension within the band had the net effect of improving the musical dynamics."

Motley Crue and Posion were often guilty of placing style over substance, the Dokken gang always had their musical priorities in line. The band enjoyed a string of million-selling discs like **Breakin' The Chains** and **Back For The Attack** that melded instantly infectious melodies with a pulsating neometal attack.

Yet despite their good-time image and silicon-slick sound, almost from the moment of the band's inception in 1984, there were deep-seeded troubles within Dokken that not only served to undermine the band's notable artistic credibility, but also brought them more media attention than did their hits! It was one of the worst kept secrets in rock that most of the time Lynch and Dokken couldn't stand each other's guts. Heck, Hit Parader even once presented a Dokken cover (gosh, those were the days!) with George and Don standing back to back holding dueling pistols ...or were they water guns? Time does dull the memory!

The net effect of all this internal friction served to tear the band asunder in 1988— at a time when they were at the height of their commercial powers, and while the so-called West Coast Metal Explosion was still in high gear. Lynch and Brown went on to form the marginally successful Lynch Mob, Pilson enjoyed a brief stint as the touring bassist with Dio, while Dokken released one disappointing solo disc that tried a bit too hard to recapture the magic of his original quartet. By 1993 it seemed like everyone was on a fast track to nowhere; Lynch Mob had dissolved, and Don found himself a man without a band or a record deal. Realizing that they had per-

George Lynch: One of the premier guitarists of his generation offer to do some work in Japan—including an album and a tour. It really

The first result of the band's "reunion" was that Oriental tour, as well as a Japanese-only disc, entitled simply **Dokken**. Japan had always been a huge market for the band, and since the Japanese still held many of America's '80s rock heroes in high regard—in sharp contrast to their State-side brethren— the group figured that once they got a strong foothold in the Orient, they could at least attempt to win over some other markets... then who knew what might happen next? Everyone involved realized it was a long shot at best, but shortly after the band's album was released overseas, a call came in from a most unexpected source-legendary A & R man John Kalodner, who during his lengthy stint at Geffen Records was credited with reviving the careers of everyone from Sammy Hagar to Aerosmith. Almost immediately, Kalodner

decided to see if his Midas touch was still in working order; what better test could there be than Dokken?

"When John called us we were a little surprised," Pilson stated. "We had known each other over the years, and he had been involved with signing Don's solo band with Geffen. When he contacted us about signing with Sony we were obviously very pleased. We didn't know where our efforts in Japan might lead, but certainly a new American deal was our goal. I think John realized that there was still plentv of fire left.

Despite Jeff's highly logical explanation, exactly why Kalodner singled out Dokken for resurrection at that moment in rock and roll time is still open for speculation. There are some who will simply state that good music is timeless, and that Dokken-despite their rocky internal chemistry- made some incredibly good music during their mid-'80s heyday. There are others, however, who will offer the opinion that in the Dokken/Lynch team Kalodner envisioned his next Tyler/Perry package: two troubled but talented rockers whose vast skills had only been partially exposed on previous albums. Unfortunately, the results of their much anticipated pairing with Kalodner only yielded marginal results, most notably on the aptly titled disc Dysfunctional. Since then the fortunes of Dokken have continued to rise and fall, most recently with Don slogging on without his original bandmates on a series of discs like 2005's **Hell to Pay**, which capture elements of the "classic" Dokken sound while rarely attaining the celestial heights of the unit's earliest efforts.

Now, more than two decades after they first hit the hard rock scene, we can all look back somewhat fondly on the accomplishments of Dokken. Few bands in hard rock history have blended together a deft songwriting sense, a dramatic instrumental flair and a platinum-coated pop/metal sensibility with more aplomb than this West Coast unit. Throughout their highly successful mid-'80s run, when their albums continually kept Dokken at the top of the sales charts, this group proved themselves to be without peer when it came to constructing brilliantly crafted, expertly executed hard rock opuses. Yet, at the same time, the highly publicized war-of-words that transpired between Don Dokken and Lynch managed to always keep the band in the "gossip page" headlines. Come to think of it, what more could any true hard rock fan want?

DID YOU KNOW: in their '80s prime, Don and the boys were managed by the same powerhouse team that handled the career or Metallica.





ome bands are innovators... some merely imitators. Some bands are both. At the height of their early-'80s appeal two distinct things could be said about Quiet Riot-that they helped open the floodgates for the West Coast Metal Explosion that was to earmark that decade's musical sound, and that they did it ostensibly by riding the coattails of Slade, the English band that had originally recorded the QR gang's biggest hit, Cum On Feel the Noize. But the truth of the matter is that such commentary—both good and bad—had little impact on wide-eyed. balding, shrieking frontman Kevin DuBrow and his crew, which at the time of their greatest acclaim was comprised of guitarist Carlos Cavazo, bassist Rudy Sarzo and drummer Frankie Banalli. They had scored big, and they made few excuses for their somewhat surprising acclaim.

"I don't know if anyone in the band expected the kind of success we had when that album (Metal Health) came out," DuBrow said. "Quiet Riot had been around for a while by then, and most of the time had been difficult. When the chance came to finally record a major label album it was really exciting. The heavy metal scene in L.A. was just beginning to blossom, and

we were ready to kick those doors wide open."

"I don't know if anyone in the band expected the kind of success we had when that album came out."

big-time success had been far from easy. Beginning life in 1977-long before

the likes of fellow L.A. rockers like Motley Crue or Ratt were even a dream in their publicist's eye-the band (then consisting of DuBrow, bassist Kelly Garni, drummer Drew Forsythe and a young guitarist named Randy Rhoads who would soon go on to stardom with Ozzy Osbourne) honed their craft in the same series of Sunset Strip clubs that had produced the likes of Van Halen just a few years earlier. Lacking either that band's stage flash or musical panache, however, DuBrow and his crew were continually disappointed when local label A&R men chose to turn their backs on the group's fledalina efforts.

Rather than wallow in their major label misery, however, Quiet Riot took the unusual tact of working around the traditional system. They chose to follow the proverbial road less traveled by recording and releasing two albums (cleverly titled **Quit Riot** and **Quiet Riot II**) in Japan. Of course, the hope was that State-side labels would hear the discs and quickly rally to the band's cause. It never happened. Indeed, it would be nearly 15 years later before an American firm would agree to put out a "best of" compilation of those poorly recorded Japanese discs and release them under the accurate but somewhat misleading title The Randy Rhoads Years. Ironically, it wasn't until Rhoads went off to join Ozzy in 1981, and a never-say-die DuBrow put together his band's most successful lineup that things started to look up for the QR brigade.

"We made some great music with Randy," DuBrow said. "But when he left I had a decision to make; did I want to throw in the towel or find some new musicians and keep going? Anyone who knows me realized the answer was easy- I picked what I believed were the best musicians on the L.A. scene and went back to work.'

It didn't take long for the reconstituted Quiet Riot to begin garnering sig-

nificant attention from both American labels and fans. Fortunately for DuBrow, just as he was beginning to reassemble his unit in 1982, the Strip started to become the mecca for the nation's heavy metal activities. Kids from near-and-far started flocking to El Lay's sunny climes, bringing their battered Stratocasters and amps along for the ride. Within a year, Los Angeles had become the hub of the West Coast Metal Explosion, and much to DuBrow's delight, Quiet Riot found themselves firmly planted at the epicenter of it all. As the band began to write new songs and perform almost on a nightly basis in and around the So Cal area, more and more labels began to realize that this bombastic sound, hair-out-to-there look and denim-andleather attire was about to become a major trend, and nobody wanted to be left out. Soon QR had their long-sought major label deal, but even they could never have imagined the degree of impact that their big-time debut, Metal Heath, would soon have upon the hard rock masses.

"We knew we had some good songs," DuBrow said. "And we knew the kind of reaction they were getting from kids at every show we played. always believed that if we got a shot we'd make it."

Obviously, the ever-confident DuBrow was spot-on with his analysis. Their album's title track jumped out of the box in fine fashion, garnering massive radio airplay—and, even more importantly, emerging as one of the first hard rock videos to enjoy "rotation" status at a just-getting-started MTV. But what happened next was both surprising, and at times a bit overwhelming for

these do-anything-to-make-it rockers. As they hit the national tour trail to support Metal Health, the label decided to release the band's cover of Cum On Feel the Noize (a song they had been forced to record) as the second single. The song had been recorded by Slade a decade earlier, and it had become a monster hit in Europe while never denting the charts on this side of the Atlantic. The decision quickly proved to be nothing less than pure genius! Within weeks of its release, the song became a Number One smash around the globe, pushing Metal Health to the #1 spot in the State-side charts— a first for any heavy metal band and permanently cementing Quiet Riot's position in heavy metal history.

While over the ensuing years the band has continued to forge ahead (if you're lucky, you can still catch them coming through your town every other year or two), it was that album and that single that will forever remain their major claims to both fame and infamy. Somehow, amid a carnival-like collection of bands like Poison, Motley, Ratt and W.A.S.P. that ruled the L.A. rock roost, it was Quite Riot that was too often singled out at the group most responsible for the "dumbing down" of the metal form. For a generation weaned on the likes of Zeppelin, Purple and Van Halen, the basic, in-yer-face posturing of DuBrow was often a little hard to

take. But in the end of Kevin knows in his heart and soul that he made a stand that will last as long as there are kids who love to crank it up loud and feel the "noize."

"I'm proud of everything we've done," he said. "It's been an absolutely incredible ride, and to be honest. I don't know if I'd change one thing about it." DID YOU KNOW: The band's "hit" version of Cum On Feel the Noize was actually done in just one studio take— and very much against their desires.





N. T.

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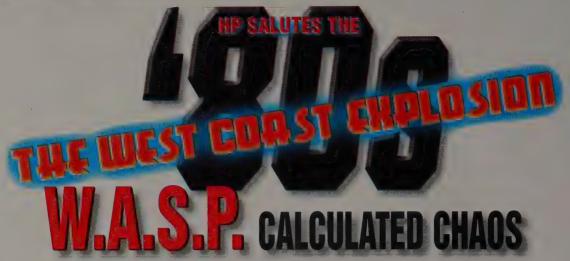
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Buckles & Leat



here was a time back in the mid-'80s when the antics of W.A.S.P.'s Blackie Lawless seemed positively *outrageous*. His blood-spurting, feather shredding on-stage actions (which usually included the theatrical "defiling" of a gagged-and-tied, mostly naked— and very willing—female participant) often appeared designed to expressly piss-off as many conservative action groups as possible. Heck, back in "the day", even the omnipresent Washington D.C. "ladies who lunch" seemed to take particular pleasure in attempting to derail Blackie's "lawless" activities. But these days things have changed markedly for W.A.S.P. Sure, Blackie may still be as outrageous as ever, and his current music may posses as much of a dark undercurrent and sonic punch as any of the group's oft-praised '80s efforts. However, when

compared to the recent output of rockers like Marilyn Manson and Slipknot, Lawless' latest tales of blood, sex and death seem positively tame!

Certainly Lawless has lost none of his desire to titillate, annihilate and thrill through his razor-edged musical productions, but quite honestly, his days as the self-professed Public Enemy Number One now seem well in the past. But, despite his current status as a rocker battling to regain his hold on the public's ever-active imagination, you've got to give Blackie some serious credit. While others have long abandoned the look, sound and style that brought them '80s fame, Lawless has stuck to it like it was coated in superglue. Whether such a sound and style will still be widely accepted by the supposedly "sophisticated" rock audiences of the 21st Century remains to be seen. But true to his nature, Lawless has no fear when it comes to his status in today's rock world.

"The time is still right for W.A.S.P.," he said.
"There aren't enough bands out there playing this kind of music. There are a few groups that are trying to be extreme, but they really don't know how to do it. We do. But this music isn't designed merely to shock; stark realism is the only thing that matters. The new music I'm making is just part of the equation. Our live show is going to blow people away to the extent that after we finish doing what we're doing, all other bands are gonna have to give up because there will be nothing visually left to do."

You know what? You've got to hand it to ol' Blackie. If nothing else, the guy certainly is persistent. While so many of his mid-'80s heavy metal compatriots have fallen by the way-side in recent years, the ever-clever, totally-self-possessed, and highly-motivated Mr. Lawless just keeps on rockin'. The fact that W.A.S.P. was never that big, that good or that important to begin with seems to have little impact on Lawless' stated intention to keep this group's carefully orchestrated "horror movie" mentality alive

and kicking for as long as possible.

Perhaps it is the lingering— and highly successful— aura of artists ranging from Manson (whom Lawless believes was "heavily influenced" by W.A.S.P.'s over-the-top '80s musical histrionics) to Mudvayne that continues to inspire the California-based metal maniacs who comprise W.A.S.P.'s latest incarnation. Perhaps it is the fact that the band's popularity has continued to be strong in such distant ports-of-call as Japan and Germany that gets Lawless out of bed in the morning. Or perhaps it's just that Blackie has found nothing better to do with his free time than contin-

ue to push the boundaries of "conventional" hard rock. Whatever the reason might be, however, the fact is that W.A.S.P. continues to work as hard as ever on the rock and roll scene, cranking out recent albums such as **Dying For the World** and the two-disc "rock opera" **The Neon God**, that may well rank among the best things the group has ever put together.

"The whole point of doing a new album is to try and capture something really special," Lawless said. "I'm not going to say that this is better than our past albums— it's just different. I think it's better comparing what we're doing now to some of the truly classic rock albums of the past than to anything we've done before."

Leave it to Lawless to compare his band's latest offerings to the classic discs of his influences, which range from Kiss and Humble Pie to the

Who and Alice Cooper. But whether you continue to love W.A.S.P.'s in-yer-face brand of blood-and-guts metal, or still find them to be the most socially reprehensible band of the century, the fact is that W.A.S.P may well rank as one of the most continually entertaining bands in metal history. Whenever Lawless leads his men into the studio or onto the concert stage, fans had better be prepared for music that rocks and rolls, struts and strolls with all the subtlety of a Tenth Avenue hooker and all the power of a neutron bomb.

"Our intentions are still very much the same as before," Lawless said with a slightly sinister smile. "We're here to rock your world, and everything in it. That may be some parent's worst nightmare, but for our fans, it's a dreamcome-true."

Obviously, understatement and modesty are two commodities in rare supply when Blackie Lawless is around. But maybe it's good that

Lawless is around. But maybe it's good that

such a large-egoed, large-mouthed rock and roll performer is still on
the scene to teach some of the meek, down-trodden stars of today a
thing or two about stage showmanship and the hard rock ideal. Of
course, with W.A.S.P. still hoping to pioneer a new metallic genre that
has occasionally been labeled as "pure evil" by both its detractors and
supporters, there are those who will certainly once again call Lawless
"a degenerate", "a pervert" and "a psychopath". The fact is that such
categorizations only bring a smile to his ever-calculating face. This is
hard rock taken to a logical extreme, and while it may be expressly
designed to offend, outrage and incite, as usual there is a definite
method behind Lawless' apparent madness.

"I've always tried to tweek people a little bit," he admitted. "But I've done that by doing what I know best, and what I truly believe in. It's all rock and roll... but I like it! I look at

a song like it's a puzzle, I like to go in with a hatchet and start chopping and moving things around until they all seem to fit " DID YOU KNOW:
Blackie has often
bragged in private
conversations about
having a minor league
baseball career prior
to kicking off his rock
and roll career.







bigger than Jon Bon Jovi was in the late '80s? Mick Jagger? Maybe. Bono? Perhaps. Michael Jackson? Stop... you're making

me laugh! Even Elvis in his prime never enjoyed the kind of multimedia fanfare that this Sayreville, New Jersey, native received as he simultaneously conquered the worlds of music, radio and MTV. For a three-year period ranging from late 1985 right through 1988, it seemed that it was virtually impossible to flip on the tube, stroll by a

newsstand or turn on the car radio without being hit by a full-out assault of Bon Jovi's infectious brand of pop/metal.

It was also virtually impossible not to like either the music made by Bon Jovi or the guy himself. Here was a dropdead good lookin' guy with a trend-setting hair cut, who also happened to be a gifted songwriter and singer— as well as a savvy businessman, to top it all off. The girls went nuts over every aspect of the Bon Jovi "experience", and even macho metal men couldn't help but admire this dude who seemingly had the world eating out of his hand. Accompanied by guitarist Richie Sambora, drummer Tico Torres, keyboardest Dave Bryan and bassist Alec John Such, Bon Jovi blazed his way through the rock world with the same devastating effectiveness as Sherman tearing through Georgia. Emerging from humble beginnings where their demo tapes (which featured the eventual hit

was nothing bigger than that. When the record labels didn't jump on us right away, we dealt with it and went back to work. I remember we got a big break when at the last minute a local promoter

asked us to open for Z.Z. Top at Madison Square Garden when the scheduled band couldn't make it. That's what did it for us-the labels took notice and we got our deal.

Still, things didn't happen overnight. Their self-titled debut album made only a minor impression on the rock world, and its follow-up,

7800 Fahrenheit, did little better. There was even talk that Bon Jovi's label was thinking of dropping the band, since they had heavily invested in promoting the group's first two albums and tours- and were running at a significant loss. Cooler heads prevailed, however, and Jon and Richie set about writing what both realized might very well be the band's make-or-break album. Soon they were ready with a collection of catchy, headshaking, toe-tapping hard rockers that they titled
Slippery When Wet, but that
project almost came to a crashing halt even before it got off the ground.

Originally the band planned on the disc's cover to be a close up of an extremely well-endowed young lady spilling out of a moist T-shirt emblazoned with the "slippery when wet" title. The folks at the label said, "thanks...but no

thanks," realizing that many retail stores in the south wouldn't even stock the album due to its rather

"We were just five guys from Jersey who all had the same dream." lascivious cover image. At the very last minute a compromise was made (the few original album covers that slipped out are now true collector's items) and Slippery When Wet was released. Almost instantly the disc took off at a nearly unprecedented level. Spurred on by MTV's unflagging support of such tunes as *Livin' On A Prayer*, **Slippery** quickly emerged as the vear's most successful hard rock release, turning Bon Jovi— and Jon in particular— into international superstars of the highest magnitude. "It all happened so fast," Jon said. "It caught us all totally off

guard. But we really didn't have that much time to think about what was happening to us. Our manager just put us to work non-stop. We toured America, then Europe, then Japan, then America again, then Europe again. It was incredibly hectic. We enjoyed it, but it also



labels, few could have guessed that this perpetually smiling unit would soon emerge as the band destined to rule the rock universe.

"We were just five guys from Jersey who all had the same dream." Jon Bon Jovi said. "Al and Tico had already been involved with bands that had made records, and Dave and Richie were just guys I met while hangin' out in Jersey clubs like the Stone Pony. When we got this band together we never had any idea where it would take us. Our goal was just to be as big as South Side Johnny And The Asbury Jukes, who had a hit record at the time. To me, there



Jovi's picture-perfect exterior. Rather than presenting the band's customary ear-to-ear grins on the disc's cover, the band struck a moody almost pained posedwith Jon practically hiding his cover-boy face from the camera. For the next year the band toured the world again, growing more and more weary of the travel, the music and each other with every passing day. Finally, at tour's end, Jon made the decision to take a long break from the group- not being sure if he'd ever return.

"I knew some serious changes had to be made," he said. "I wanted to get more control over what we did and how we did it. I felt that we had been run into the ground by people not in the band. But the fact was that after about a year apart, we all realized that we wanted to stay together and take this band to the next level, at least in a musical sense.'

By expanding their artistic scope— adding darker musi-cal textures and more probing lyrics to the group's trademark sound- Bon Jovi quickly produced two more albums, Keep The Faith and These Days, which proved that they could be effective, if perhaps somewhat less high profile, performers in the '90s. And, perhaps even more surprisingly, their 21st Century efforts, Crush and Have A Nice Day, have once again returned the band to the arena-filling, radiofriendly status they enjoyed almost two decades ago! While their style and sound will forever be linked to the hard rock glory days of the late '80s, Bon Jovi is

determined to carry on, continually delighting their fans around the world with their infectious melodies and hip-shaking stage gyrations.

'This is what I was born to do," Jon said. " Once rock and roll gets in your blood, it never leaves.

While their follow-up to Slippery offered another potent dose of radio-ready rock and roll— and eventually proved to be almost as successful commercially— major problems were brewing under Bon

had to go right back into the studio to record New Jersey we really

had a bad attitude going.





and the extraordinary was expected. From their carefully choreographed on-stage insanity to their headline-grabbing offstage personas, Kiss were flesh and blood comic book characters come-to-life. superheroes of the metal kingdom, and they reveled in every magazine cover and television interview that came their way.

"We've never liked leaving much to chance," Stanley said. "Even in the early

days, when we weren't sure exactly what

After a relatively slow commercial start, during which time such albums as Hotter Than Hell and Dressed To Kill won over the "first platoon" of what would eventually become the Kiss Army, the band began to hit their stride. The 1975 release of Kiss Alive signaled the reakthrough success for this New York-based outfit, and for the next four

years with the appearance of such million-selling discs as Destroyer, Rock & Roll Over and Love Gun-Kiss controlled the rock marketplace like few bands had done before. They may have lacked the musical aplomb of Led Zeppelin or the sinister image of Black Sabbath, but Kiss were America's superheroes. Their approach wasn't about style or class- it was about laying down the most blatant, overpowering and mesmerizing blitzkrieg of pure rock and roll hype the world had ever seen. Long before radio shock jock Howard Stern proclaimed himself "the king of all media", Kiss had that title all but wrapped up.

"We wanted to be outrageous—that was kind of the point of it all,"
Simmons explained. "We didn't really care if the critics didn't like what we were

doing. This was something that we knew millions of kids around the world

would relate to and they did.'

How ironic it is to many within the rock world that more than three decades after they first exploded on the rock world, the year 2006 finds the metal masses still wondering what Kiss' next move might be. Some insiders insist that Gene and Paul have finally begun to run out of steam, and may have decided to put their beloved band permanently in moth balls. Others scoff at such a notion, reminding us all that there still remain a few major opportunities for Kiss to "cash in" including an inevitable "farewell" pay-per-view concert. In fact, with revenues continuing to roll in from a staggering array of sources—including a variety of Simmons-inspired merchandising outlets—it would seem as if Kiss will never leave us!

Some cynics may state that the ever-savvy Simmons and Stanley have agreed to continue on with Kiss merely for the major pay-days-as well as a much-needed ego boost. Others will insist that each and every Kiss tour is exactly what the contemporary music world needs to remind fan everywhere what real rock and roll excitement is all about. In these hip-hopping, rap-cummetal times, the pure, high-voltage, highly-theatrical, anything-goes energy of Kiss on stage may strike many as a much needed breath of fresh air— even if that "air" is, in fact, now more than 30 years old.

'We've always had a great time having people tell us what we couldn't

do," Stanley said. "Then we'd go out and do it."

cess of their seemingly never-ending "reunion" tours. In 1997, after nearly 17 years apart, the band's original four members once again donned their trademark costumes and hit the road— to the tune of over \$40 million in concert revenues alone. Even today, with Criss and Frehley once again out of the band, the incredible appeal of Kiss remains as strong as ever.

"Our goal has always been to take everyone's wildest expectations and then top them," Stanley said. "By now I think our fans are convinced that we can do

just about anything.

Anything.... You bet! There can be no doubt that over the last 34 years Kiss is the band that has best defined the more theatrical aspects of the American heavy metal scene. But such a statement does little to convey the power, the magic and the creativity that this ever-clever unit has utilized to attain that lofty status. Nor does it come close to explaining the myriad roadblocks and detours that Stanley and Simmons have needed to overcome in order to maintain their position as the single most important, influential and successful American metal band of their generation.

How amazing it is that so many years after they first shocked the rock world with their fire-breathing, blood-spurting powers, Kiss clearly remain at the top of their heavy metal game. Despite a marked downturn in their album viability over the last few years, and a growing scarcity of their live shows, Kiss remains a band capable of instantly filling any arena in the world and selling everything from caskets to toilet paper to their ever-loyal fan base. Indeed, no matter what the future may hold for this awesome foursome, for Kiss it has been an amazing rocket ride to stardom— a ride no other band has ever come close to matching in terms of excitement and pure rock and roll craziness.

From the moment they first exploded on the scene in the early-'70s, Kiss was unlike anything else that the rock world had ever seen. With their kabukistyled facial makeup, outrageous stage shows and instantly infectious pop/metal anthems, these Costumed Crusaders seemed to have all the bases covered. You could love 'em, you could hate 'em— you simply couldn't ignore 'em. This was a walkin', talkin', travelin' rock and roll circus where the unbelievable was routine



Star more than Skid Row's
Sebastian Bach. There was
nothing about the high profile,
emotionally-draining, private-time-stealing, media madness known as
stardom that Bach didn't revel in to the max. From the instant Skid Row
hit the headlines in the late '80s with the release of their debut album—
spurred on by the hit status of their anthemic single Youth Gone Wild—

Bach hogged the spotlight as if he were a moth drawn to the proverbial flame. Perhaps he sensed that his band's moment in the sun might be brief...perhaps not. But either way, Bach's too-pretty-for-his-own-good looks, his effervescent personality and his larger than life persona made him the quintessential late-'80s star; there was no brooding sentimentality here, no hidden anguish or painful introspection. With Skid Row's

dynamic frontman, what you saw was what you got— six-and-a-half feet of pure hell-raisin', groupie grabbin', limo-ridin' rock and

roll energy

"Rock and roll is supposed to be fun, isn't it?" Bach exclaimed. "That's one of the things I have against all the guys who currently seem to be the crowd favorites. I don't think they're enjoying themselves one bit. It's the Kurt Cobain disease— they're all suffering from it. I grew up at a time when rock and roll was all about getting out there with your friends, hopping in the car and just having a great time. I'm not saying that there isn't room for a little more depth than that in music— in fact I think Skid Row's music went a lot deeper than some people gave us credit for. But the bottom line is still that this is supposed to be the most fun you can have with your pants on."

In many ways Skid Row represented both the best and the worst of the late-'80s heavy metal scene. Yeah, they could be vacuous and almost clownish in both their on and off-stage behavior, and their albums on occasion fell into a morass of radio-inspired drivel. But at the same time, by hailing from New Jersey rather than the air-head state of California, there was a sense of adventure and freshness about everything Skid Row touched that filled their songs with a state-of-the-metal-art feel. While Bach was the unquestioned centerpiece of the band's attack, it was actually guitarist Dave "Snake" Sabo and bassist Rachel Bolan who comprised the band's creative soul. Along with drummer Rob Affuso and guitarist Scotti Hill, those two had struggled on the Jersey club circuit for nearly five years before a happenstance meeting brought them in touch with Canadian refugee Bach.

Their next stroke of luck occurred when fellow Jersey resident, Jon Bon Jovi, saw the realigned quintet perform live shortly after Bach had joined. Always a sharp judge of rock and roll talent, Bon Jovi quickly moved in to sign the band to a "personal services" contract that ostensibly stated that Jon would get the band a recording deal, but that in return he would own a piece of the group's action—including a healthy cut of their publishing royalties. It was the kind of "deal with the devil" that Skid Row couldn't refuse. After all, here was an almost guaranteed shot at big-time success, and all they had to do

was cut Bon Jovi in.

"Jon did take a lot of credit for the band making it," Sabo said. "But I guess that's okay. I had known him since I was a kid, and I thought he was

just helping us out because he liked us. But one thing I always knew about Jon was that he was a sharp businessman. And while he did unquestionably help us, he helped himself as well— as if he needed the money. But who knows what would have happened to us if he hadn't stepped in? We had already tried to make it before, and it hadn't happened. Maybe it would have with Bas in the band, but I think Jon definitely got things rolling in the right direction."

The right direction, indeed! Skid Row's self-titled debut disc proceeded to sell over three million copies, and the band's road show (where they spent most of the year opening for Bon Jovi) proved the group to be one of the most entertaining acts on the rock road circuit.

While they soon grew tired of answering questions concerning Bon Jovi's involvement with the band, Skid Row seemed like they had beaten the odds—they were the last of the pure '80s hair metal bands to sneak under the commercial wire before Nirvana hit the scene and the contemporary music world changed forever.

Rather than battling against the shifting tides, Skid Row began further distancing themselves from both the Bon Jovi influence, and from the pop/metal stylings that characterized their multi-platinum debut. Instead, they turned in a far heavier direction on their next two albums, Slave To The Grind and Sub Human Race. In sound and style these discs owed more to the raw metallic style of Pantera (another band that had successfully shifted from "glam" to "hardcore") than to the poseur-rock sounds of their first effort. Unfortunately, neither disc came close to matching the sales success of

their illustrious debut—but that didn't seem to faze these guys one bit. Rather than sulking, or fondly looking back on their brief period of glory, they chose to merely forge ahead. If it meant playing clubs again, so be it. The chance to stand on stage and play rock and roll was all that Skid Row ever asked. Even cover-boy Bas (who left the band in 1995 and has since launched a fairly successful acting career while maintaining his rock and roll interests thanks to the recent MTV-sponsored show Supergroup) had no qualms about playing down his looks and focusing his abundant energies on just getting off a crowd of a thousand rabid fans. It may have been a long way from the cover of Hit Parader, but it

was still life in the spotlight.

"No one promised us that this was going to be easy," Bach said. "And we never wanted it to be easy. When the first album became a hit, we never let it go to our heads. We enjoyed it, but it didn't change us. The only thing we didn't like was becoming type-cast as these pretty-boy rockers who sang pretty-boy songs. We had a big hit with *I Remember You*, and then we never played the song live! We hated that song!! I said when our first album came out that I didn't care if it went gold or platinum—as long as we could make another one. That was a good attitude to have."



DID YOU KNOW:

Sebastian once
played the role of
Jeckyl & Hyde on
Broadway... replacing
former Baywatch
hunk David Hasselhoff
in the title role.





flicts exemplified the freewheeling, fun-loving, anything-goes attitude that has always been at the heart of rock and roll's appeal. Quite simply, Aerosmith has always been the band we could truly call our own, with vocalist Steven Tyler, guitarist Joe Perry, guitarist Brad Whitford, bassist Tom Hamilton and drummer Joey Kramer exuding a devil-may care charisma that has now clearly withstood the test of time. Especially during their '80s peak, when these oft-troubled Boston-based rockers finally cast aside their predilections

towards substance abuse and once again started focusing on their unique brand of powerpacked musical dynamite, no other band seemed better qualified to celebrate the fun, the fury and the fashion that has always stood as the very cornerstone of the State-side hard rock approach.

American bands," Tyler said. "That's a great compliment when you consider our biggest influences were British bands like the Stones and the Yardbirds. But don't forget where they

and roll groups still played second fiddle to their British brethren, Aerosmith's raucous, roadhouse sound was immediately compared to that of everyone from the Rolling Stones to Led Zeppelin. But there was something about Aerosmith that made them instantly stand out from the growing State-side crowd of neo-Brit poseurs. Sure Tyler may have had Mick's lips and Perry may have conveniently borrowed some of Keith's guitar swagger, but Aerosmith never needed to rely on anyone or anything in order to garner a lion's share of attention. After all, they were playing American music-the blues -- in a distinctly American way. What the Stones and Zeppelin may have had to pick up second-hand, Aerosmith seemed to have had injected directly into their veins. From the moment their self-titled debut disc was released in 1972 (featuring the smash hit Dream On) there was no mistaking it— Aerosmith were

going to give American rock and roll the credibility it had long craved. "We started out as a band that loved playing the blues and loved playing rock and roll, and when you think about it, that's still pretty much what we are today," Perry said. "We never expected this to last for the long-run. I don't think any of us ever gave it much thought."

The success of Aerosmith's debut disc was followed in short order by 1974's Get Your Wings, 1975's Toys In The Attic and 1976's Rocks. Each album sold progressively more than its predecessor, with **Toys** becoming the group's first platinum seller, and **Rocks** their first venture into double-platinum terrain. It was all exciting stuff for these five young rockers, and some of the fame -- along with the accompanying fortune - began to go directly to the band's collective head. The stories of both Aerosmith's off-stage excesses, and their inner turmoil, soon began filling the rock wires. Even on stage, where Tyler's hip-shaking gyrations and scarf-dripping microphone stand had fast become trademarks, some noticeable negative changes were taking place. Despite the group's obvious internal problems they struggled ahead, releasing the moderately successful Draw The

What's really unfortunate is that I was so out of it most of the time that when Joe left the true significance of what had happened was kind of lost on me." Tyler said. "I was more concerned about taking care of my own needs than anything

It would still be a long, hard road for Tyler, Kramer and Hamilton before Aerosmith would again enjoy anything resembling smooth sailing. Many began to

to the road.

predict that the Aero force wouldn't make it... and to secretly whisper that a similar fate might befall the increasingly unpredictable Tyler. But just as things began to plummet towards total oblivion, a ray of light peaked through, On Valentine's Day, 1984, Perry and Whitford showed up unexpectedly at a home-town Aerosmith concert in Boston. Within weeks it was announced that the band's original lineup would be reuniting for a "Back In The Saddle Tour"— and more importantly, both Tyler and Perry had agreed to try and kick their dependencies before returning

together to begin work on Night In The Ruts in

1979, the writing was

release, Perry quit the

band... and a few years

apparently already on the

wall. Soon after the disc's

It proved to be a difficult trip through rehab, a path filled with a never-ending series of temptations, distractions and diversions, but the self-proclaimed "Toxic Twins" finally made it through with flying colors. By early 1985 the hale-and-hearty unit was back in the studio working on Done With Mirrors, the disc that unbeknownst to Tyler, Perry and the boys, was to serve as the primary tool in reestablishing Aerosmith's stellar credentials. The eye-opening success of Mirrors was quickly followed by a string of platinum successes—1987's Permanent Vacation (featuring the hit Dude Looks Like A Lady), and 1989's Pump. Each album was followed-up with an ever-larger touring itinerary, during which these one-time Boston Bad Boys celebrated with diet sodas and bottles of "fake beer"

As a new decade began so did another era for Aerosmith. By 1993 there was no question that they were the toast of the rock

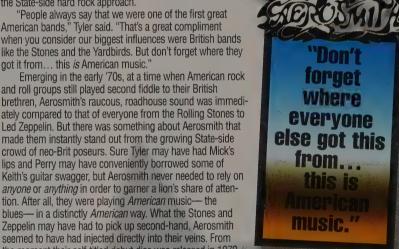
world. The music scene had changed, with "grunge" and "alternative" wiping away most of the familiar faces of the '80s. But through it all, Aerosmith survived and prospered. That year they released Get A Grip, the multi-platinum disc that would serve as their swan song to Geffen. Earlier that year the band had signed an extraordinary deal with Sony Music that would not begin until the release of Nine Lives in 1997! But as soon as that disc emerged, it was clear that Aerosmith hadn't lost an inch off of their hard rockin' fastball,

a fact proven even more emphatically by 2002's Just Push Play and 2004's backto-the-blues, Honkin' On Bobo. Now, in 2006, we anxiously await the next chapter in this band's incredible story to unfold.

Clearly for Aerosmith, the

Joe has his own brand of hot

sauce called rock and roll train just keeps Boneyard Brew. Line in 1977 and Live Bootleg in 1978. But by the time the group gathered a'rollin'





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ife is never boring when you're Ronnie James Dio. Throughout a 35 year career, which has seen this pint-sized powerhouse front such bands as Elf, Rainbow, Black Sabbath and his own selfnamed unit, ol' RJD has always fought to do things his wayoften to the consternation of the equally strong-willed musicians he's worked with. From Ritchie Blackmore to Tony Iommi, everyone has respect for Dio's unmatched vocal skills and dynamic stage press ence. But there's that other side of his nature that just seems to drive his fellow rockers crazy. Unlike virtually everyone else in the rock biz, Ronnie James Dio may just be too damn smart for his own good, and that level of intelligence has caused him more than his fair share of trouble during his rock and roll career. But, considering the fact that he's been involved with selling more than 25 million albums during his lengthy stint in the metal kingdom, these days RJD seems to be a rather content fella- or at least as content as this self-professed "control freak" can get.

"I feel best when I'm controlling my own band," he said. "I'm the first to admit that when I was in Rainbow or Sabbath it was a difficult

task for me in some ways. I have the utmost respect for people like Ritchie and Tony, but the fact is that they have their way of doing things, and I have mine. Over the years I've learned what works best for me, and when I'm with my band, that's the course I invariably choose to travel."

Indeed, despite his high-profile stints with Sabbath and Rainbow, it was during his 1980's run with Dio that RJD enjoyed his greatest acclaim. On a string of chart-topping discs, including **The Last in Line**, **Holy Diver** and **Dream Evil**, Dio's larger-than-life vocal power and ability to present sweeping, panoramic, highly melodramatic metal moments cast him in the role as one of the form's most talented performers. Filling his songs with epic images of dragons, demons and damsels in distress, Dio's musical output seemed to continually touch the soul of the metal masses, who sensed in this pint-sized powerhouse a commitment to the "true" metal cause that few other performers could ever hope to match. In fact, it was during this time that he was able to step out of the giant shadows cast by his previous associations and make his own permanent mark upon the hard rock landscape. No question about it— he may not have been large... but he was in charge!

"I freely admit that I'm happiest when I'm in charge," he said." It's not to be dictatorial by any means- it's just that I know things are going to get done that way. In Sabbath, even during my second stint with them, it often seemed like nobody wanted to take control, to make the tough decisions. That taught me lessons that I took with me— I created the most democratic version of Dio I'd ever been involved with, but I was still always very willing to make the tough calls. That's what needs to be done, and if I ruffled a few feathers by

doing that, so be it.

Ruffling feathers has never been a problem for Dio, and even in 2006, he seems intent to ruffle just as many as ever. He continues to record and tour, his voice and stage persona as powerful as ever. As recently as 2004, he performed in giant halls like New York's Madison Square Garden where his band opened for Iron Maiden. And despite the fact that the vast majority of those in attendance had clearly come

to witness the Maiden Metal Machine in action, the standing ovation that they provided Dio at the end of his band's set showed the proper degree of respect that the world's rock community still holds for the inimitable RJD.

"I'm continually amazed by the dedication the fans have," he said.
"I see faces that have been coming to my shows for 30 years... and I see kids who weren't even born when my first solo album came out.
It's a great mix. They've stayed loyal to me throughout the years because they know what I'm about and what I stand for. I only hope that their degree of loyalty has been returned by my efforts."

The reason for this "loyalty" is rather easy to explain. Despite the passing of years, and the changing of musical trends within the rock world, Dio remains one performer dedicated to going right for the jugular, playing a brand of hard-hitting metal that seems to have virtually disappeared from the scene. There are few bows to commercialism in his hard-hitting tomes and even fewer nods to the "alternative" scene that has robbed true metal of much of its recent luster. And while Dio admits a grudging admiration for much of the new-breed metal that's currently dominating the music scene, he's not about to change his tune for anyone or anything. Yes, the music he's making today may be a tad more cutting edge and con-

temporary, focusing on

a difficult task for me in some Ways "

1980's run with

1980's run with

rather than on the image of hopeful "wishing wells" and "rainbows" that always peppered past Dio compositions. Yet, this is one rocker who will always stay loyal to the metal fundamentals that form the foundation of both his music and his beliefs.

"I'm not about to start trying to play copycat," he said. "I've gone through this so many times before. When L.A. started to become hot back in the '80s and so-called 'glam' was the in thing, there was certainly no temptation on my part to follow suit. And then, with all the grunge and alternative, there was still no temptation. I know what I do, and I think I do it as well as anyone. I am glad to see that with most of the newer metal bands that the focus has returned to the music and not to the way somebody dresses or looks. That's healthy. But the music we make is classic and timeless. I've never wanted to be trendy."

While no one will ever accuse him of being a trend follower, one couldn't help be ask Dio how he viewed the current gen-

eration of metal bands, many of whom site Dio-era Black Sabbath as a primary inspirations. As one might expect from the ever-perceptive RJD, he shot from the hip when it came to discussing metal's latest trends. "If those bands are adding something new, then it's fine, but if all they're doing is rehashing old

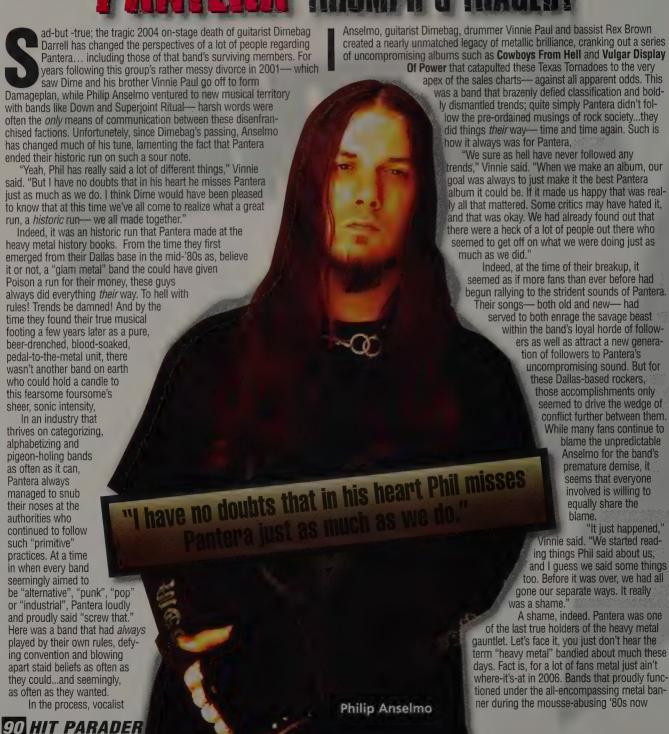
Sabbath riffs, what's the point?"

DID YOU KNOW:

Throughout the '80s,
Hit Parader ran a regular, annual feature where
RJD provided his haseball
predications for the
upcoming season.







state their desire to be called "hard rock" or even "emo." Other so-called metal bands have vanished from the scene leaving nary a trace of their musical existence behind them. However, before anyone dare attempt to write heavy metal off as merely a dated musical remnant of a bygone era, let it be said that Pantera loudly and proudly asserted their allegiance to the metal cause time and time again- and they profoundly influenced today's generation of amp-blasters in the

"If we weren't a heavy metal band, then what the hell were we?" asked Vinnie. "Our influences were heavy metal bands like Sabbath and Zeppelin, and the music we played tended to go in that direction. I'm not that big on labeling music-I'd rather just play it or listen to it. But if you're gonna call us something it might as well be heavy metal. There sure ain't nuthin' wrong with that.'

Whether or not one chooses to view Pantera as the last true defenders of the heavy metal faith, the fact is that few bands in rock history have been more vociferously loyal to their full-throttle metal attack. Throughout their album catalog, the band seemed to live, breath and devour all the varied elements that comprise the heavy metal lifestyle. The hallowed metal troika of "sex and drugs and rock and roll" all played impor-tant roles in Pantera's existence over years. But far more importantly, it will always be remembered that it was their steadfast belief in the power of heavy metal that will forever remain this unit's endearing and enduring legacy.

"What we were always very proud of was the connection we've always had with our fans," Vinnie said. "They knew what to expect from us, and we always did our best to deliver. There was a circular energy to what we do; we pour our hearts out to the fans on our albums and on stage.

and they did the same for us. We each fed off of the other. It kept everything going along at top speed. One couldn't exist without the other as far as we were concerned.



ROCKIN' THE WORLD

t seems as if once every decade or so a band comes along that is destined to change the course of rock history. The Beatles did it. So did Zeppelin. So did Nirvana. And so did Van Halen. Back in 1977 the American rock scene was in a rut. Disco ruled the sales charts and limp-wristed songwriters dominated the airwayes. The world needed a good-time band to come along and give rock a good kick in the ass. Van Halen was that band. With the single magical moment of enjoyed by the VH brigade.

"It's been an amazing ride," Eddie Van Halen said. "We never could have imagined half the things that have happened to us over the years. But we've done our best to enjoy it all."

Eddie clearly recalls that when his band's self-titled debut album emerged in 1978 he had no idea how the rock public might react to it. Up to that time the group had more or less lived in the LA fish bowl — a place where they had become the unquestioned kings of the Sunset Strip. Van Halen's guitar-heavy,

highly theatrical style hit the West Coast like a nuclear explosion. Everyone was bowled over: some by the "shocking" energy this band presented, others by the sheer joy exuded by a unit that seemed to revel in the basic thrill of rock and roll. Still, despite their local acclaim, and their growing buzz in

the rock under-

ground, Eddie still wasn't sure how his band's blitzkrieg approach would go over in the still conservative musical tides of the late '70s.

Back then all we wanted to do was get on stage and have a good time," he said.
"We were as surprised

as anvone when that record came out and started to do so well. All we

wanted to do was keep the party going.

Party, indeed! Over the ensuing years Van Halen was to establish itself as the ultimate rock and roll party band. Here was a group that destroyed dressing rooms because they found brown M&M's backstage, and cut a swath through groupieville unmatched by any other band this side of Led Zeppelin. With Roth leading the way, in the early '80s Van Halen quickly changed the very fabric of contemporary rock and

roll. Blending Eddie's unmatched instrumental dexterity with Roth's Borscht Belt sense of humor, Van Halen single-handedly helped revitalize the American hard rock form. These guys just went out there, plugged in their instruments and wailed away; in the process becoming the single most successful hard rock band of their era.

"I can guarantee you that in the beginning the furthest thought in any of our minds was making a musical statement that was going to last a long time," Eddie declared. "Probably our biggest goal was to make sure the backstage bar was well stocked and that we got to meet as many fans as possible after the show.'

The party-all-night act worked for a long time. Van Halen scored a continual streak of chart-topping albums including Van Halen, Van Halen II and Women And Children First. At the same time, Edward was being hailed farand-wide as the greatest guitarist of his generation, and the single most influ-



Eruption from

their self-titled debut disc. VH loudly and proudly

announced their arrival— and what an arrival it was. If ever there was a group that seemingly possessed every ingredient needed for success Van Halen was it. In Edward Van Halen they had a brilliant instrumentalist— the most respected guitarist of his time. In drummer Alex Van Halen and bassist Michael Anthony they possessed a rock-solid rhythm section. And in vocalist David Lee Roth they featured hard rock's clown prince, a high-kickin', high-energy rock and roll machine who possessed the lion-maned good looks to turn on the girls in the back row.

Over the years Van Halen have certainly gone through their highs and lows; Roth quit the band in 1984 at the peak of their powers, and rumors of personal problems have often surrounded the Van Halen brothers. But through it all-whether it was with subsequent vocalist Sammy Hagar, or even Gary Cherone—the group has maintained their musical integrity, as well as their multi-million selling popularity. In fact, few bands in rock and roll history have ever managed to maintain the high level of critical and commercial success





or more than 30 years the Scorpions have reigned as the kings of Continental Hard Rock. These Teutonic Terrors have proven timeand-time again that a band doesn't need to hail from such musical hotbeds as the U.S. or England in order to touch the pulse of the rock world. In fact, these German greats have outsold just about any other band in rock history, moving a combined total of over 30 million copies of such chart-topping albums as Lovedrive, In Trance. and Blackout. But for vocalist Klaus Meine, guitarist Rudolf Schenker, and guitarist Matthias Jabs— who remain at the core of this perpetually chart-topping unit— just selling albums has never been their primary motivation. As hard rock's Ambassadors To The World, throughout their hallowed career the Scorps have visited ports both near and far, in the process bringing their distinctive pop/metal sound to all corners of the known universe. As we learned from this conversation with Meine and Schekner, even today the Scorpions remain as dedicated as ever to both their rock and roll craft and transmitting their musical message around the globe.

HP: How do you view the Scorpions' legacy in

Klaus Meine: It is amazing that even after all these years, we are still gaining a fresh perspective on many aspects of the music business... and on ourselves! But at the heart of what we do is still the music, and I like to believe that the music we've made over the years is very much a continuation of what the Scorpions have always stood for. We've been very successful for a long time by doing what we do, and there have been many other musical undercurrents during our career that have temporarily put our style out of favor. But we've managed to survive those trends and maintain our popularity. We're very proud of that.

Rudolf Schenker: We are also very proud of the way the Scorpions' music has maintained a certain level of consistency throughout the years. We would never allow our music to take a very drastic change from what has made that possible. Around the world we are bigger and more successful than we ever have been before, and each year the chance comes our way to play new places in Europe, Africa and South America. We have always been a true band of the world.

HP: Do you find your style of music still as popular around the globe?

RS: Yes, in many places it is as strong as ever. It may not be as popular in America at the moment, but in so many places we are as popular— if not more popular— than ever. It is an amazing phenomenon.

KM: It has become very difficult in America because the media has become somewhat fickle. They run to whatever they think is hot at the moment. But it is good for us to see that a number of veteran groups have come out with new albums in the last year and done well with them. And other bands, like Motley Crue and Black Sabbath, have done very well on the road over the last couple of years. It tells us that there are still millions of fans in America who still love good rock and roll music.

HP: Why do you think the Scorpions are so big in international

KM: I think it's due to a number of reasons. One of those is that we've

always toured all over the world— even as far back as 1975. Even before we were successful in America, we had become one of the biggest bands in Japan and on the European continent. Then we were one of the first bands to extensively tour South America. We were

doing that in the early '80s. We love America and American fans, but there is a big, wide, wonderful world out there filled with exotic places that seem to love what we do. It's quite exciting.

RS: Coming from Germany, we always felt we were rock ambassadors to the entire world. We didn't want to be known just in America, England or Japan. We wanted to be known everywhere, and we've been

very successful at that. But that doesn't mean that we don't want to win over the American audiences again.

over the American audiences again.

HP: Do you find it interesting that in America some of your classic videos for songs like Rock You Like A Hurricane still get played on MTV2 or even VH1?

RS: It's very interesting... and very rewarding. Some of those videos are now more than 20 year old! We realize that some people who may have been fans of ours for years, may have grown away from watching MTV as much as they used to. Maybe they are watching VH-1. But we also know that our music should appeal to a new generation of fans who are watching MTV. Maybe it's not rap or alternative, but it certainly is rock and roll.

KM: I wouldn't want to think that after so many years we have to resort to playing games in order to have the American audience listen to our music. We know that the market has changed in recent years, and that media outlets have become far more restrictive in what and to whom they choose to lend their support. But we honestly believe that the final line is always good music. If people want to hear

good rock and roll, they'll find our music.

HP: When you play in America now, you're performing in theater-sized venues. Has that been a rewarding experience?

venues. Has that been a rewarding experience?

RS: Very much. That's much more the way we play in other parts of the world. In Europe, you tend not to have the kind of big indoor arenas that

you have throughout the States. There, you play in 3,000 seat theaters, and there's definitely a better feeling in those kinds of places. You can see the audience, they can see you, and the sound is invariably better.

KM: We like to do what's best for the fans. Back in the '80s, if we had played theaters, thousands of our fans in each city never would have

gotten tickets to the shows. We were more or less forced

to play arenas
 because of the
 demand. All we want
 is the chance to play
 anywhere at anytime.
 In case anyone doubt-

ed it, the Scorpions are alive and well... and we're playing the best rock and roll of our lives **DID YOU KNOW**

On his post-Scorps
career, original band
guitarist, Uli Roth, has
released a variety of
Hendrix-inspired
"space rock" albums.

"Even after all these years, we are still gaining a tresh perspective on many aspects of the music business... and on ourselves."





hese days, it's hard to go anywhere outside of a Middle Eastern stronghold without having the words, music and face of Ozzy Osbourne come at you from seemingly every available angle. After more than 35 years of ruling the rock world as the Metal Godfather, the inimitable Ozz has finally gotten his "act" to the mainstream... and the mainstream has loved it! Thanks to the incredible success of his hit TV series, *The Osbournes*, which last fall completed its four-year run on MTV (though it will probably continue on *forever* through re-runs), Ozzy has become a true cultural icon, a rocker known to both blue-haired grannies in lowa and leather wearing dudes along the Sunset Strip. As both a solo performer and as the once-and-future frontman for the legendary Black Sabbath, Ozzy has seen and done it all, while his wild off-stage antics have become the stuff of rock and roll legend. With all that in mind, and as he releases his first solo disc in nearly five years, we thought that this would be the perfect time, and the perfect place to present the one-and-ony Ozzy, in Hin Own Wards.

Rock and roll

changed my

life-- it's

allowed me to

go places and

do things I

could have only

dreamed about

otherwise."

"I'm very thankful that I can get up each day and do something I love. I've grown to appreciate it all more with every passing day. It's been incredible—but I think I still have a trick or two hidden up my sleeve."

"I've always said that I don't know where I'd be if it wasn't for rock and roll. Maybe I'd be in prison. Maybe I'd be dead. Who really knows? But rock and roll changed my life— it's allowed me to go places and do things I could have only dreamed about otherwise."

"People are always stopping me going, 'Hi Ozz,' but that was true ten years ago as well. Maybe the show has made a few more people aware of me— I don't know. The fact is that Sharon and I still try to lead as normal a life as possible. We still occasionally try to go out to dinner or the movies if we can. Usually something comes up that prevents it. But the intention is there. We are a normal family."

"When I'm home for too long, I want to get on the road. When I'm on the road for too long, I want to go home. I've always been that way, and now it's probably worse than ever. But when I'm home I don't really have the chance to relax that much. I'm either in the studio recording, or rehearsing for a tour, or working out, or doing something else."

"The great thing about Black Sabbath is that we've all reached a stage of our lives that we enjoy being together. We have a long, shared past and we're mature enough, and clear-headed enough now to enjoy what we've accomplished. There has always been a certain magic when we were all together; sometimes that was tension and sometimes it was craziness, but it was always there. "

"For a long time I felt I had something to prove as a solo performer. I had to prove that I could stand on my own and be successful. There was also the question of money, because when I was drinking heavily and doing drugs. I pissed so much of it away. Now I'm more confident about myself and much more in control of my life."

"It is a very strange feeling to realize that there are people who first learned about me as they casually flipped through their TV dials on a Tuesday night. I can imagine all the little old ladies out there seeing my face and saying, "Who the *%&@ is that, and how the *%&@ did he ever get on television?" But I've gotten a little more used to the idea that the TV show reaches people who don't know much about my music. Actually, that's kind of interesting."

"I've got to be careful that my kids don't take all of the attention they're getting to heart. We try to treat them like normal kids, but how many kids have me for a dad? Thank God for Sharon. She's the one who truly keeps them in line. I'm just a push-over."

"The live set I'm playing these days kind of creates itself. I'm there to entertain the fans. I'm there to play what they want to hear. There are a number of songs that simply have to be in the set. I've done enough solo albums at this point that I really have to cut down on what I can play. Then there are a few new songs that I want to include. You don't want to shove those down anyone's throat... you want the fans to want to hear them. And then there's the Sabbath stuff which I still love doing. I've been playing *Paranoid* for more than 30 years,

and I still love doing it.

"One of the things I've learned in this business is that you can never really predict what's going to happen next. Ten years ago, I would have sworn that I'd never work with Black Sabbath again. See what happened? So if I were to say that I won't headline any more Ozzfests, I might look very silly a few years from now. I think the key point is that the event has grown big enough at this point. It's not essential to have me involved... at least as the headline attraction. It's hard to do it year after year. Maybe I'll take a year or two off from it, then come back. Who knows?"

Maybe I'll take a year or two off from it, then come back. Who knows?"

"Sometimes songs take on a life of their own. The beauty of music is that people can interpret it as they wish and allow songs to take on certain meanings in their life. Great songs

hopefully also lend themselves to a bit of optimism and hope, and I like that. If I can bring a bit of hope into people's lives in these bleak times, then I believe I've done something worthwhile."

"There's so much work involved with each Ozzfest, so much planning. It's not easy. I was never the kind of person who particularly liked to tour. When I was out on the road I'd always complain about things, and I guess that's the way I still am. Certainly Sharon tells me I complain about everything (laughs)."

"Sharon controls just about everything in my life. When she says to go into the studio, I do. When she tells me it's time to tour, I go. There's no discussion, and certainly no arguing. What she

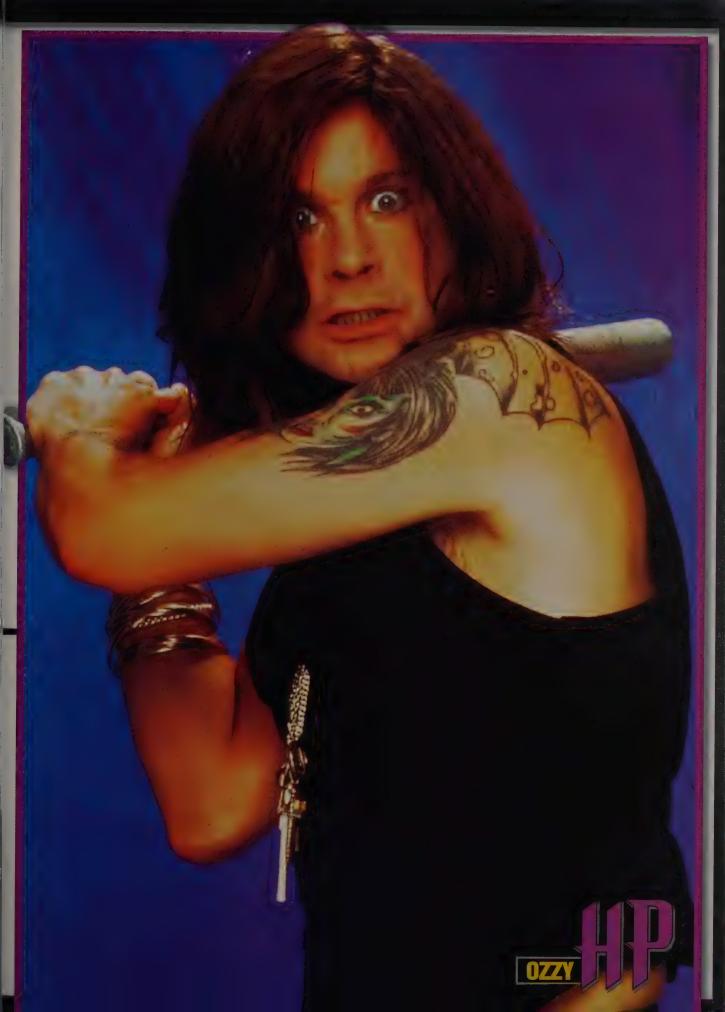
says goes. But I'm glad to be doing it."

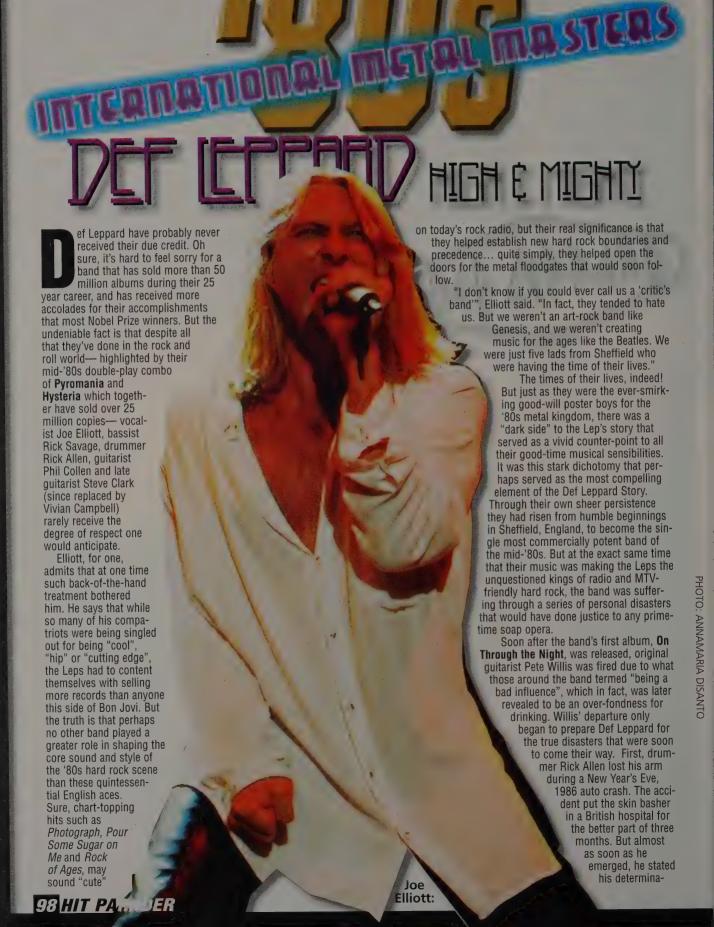
"There's no question that I have lived a charmed life for more than three decades, and it seems that

more people know about me today than ever before. All I can say is that it's all much more than I could have expected."

nin YOU KNOW

The Ozz' most famous offstage antics include biting the head off a bird in a record label meeting, relieving himself on the Alamo and swinging bareass from a chandelier at a music conference.







nyone who survived the mousse-abusing '80s invariably has their own reflections on Whitesnake. Maybe it was their series of dramatic, guitar-heavy tunes like Still of the Night or Here I Go Again, which seemed to tap directly into the long-dormant spark of Zep-styled craftsmanship on their way to chart-topping status. Perhaps it was the image of a long-haired, open-shirted, perpetually tanned David Coverdale contorting his body in seemingly impossible angles in order to draw every ounce of emotive power out of each note he sang. Or most likely (especially if you're a guy) what sticks most prominently in the mind's eve is the vision of Coverdale's

local bar band. He had been chosen from total obscurity in the mid-70s to front what was then the biggest group on earth, Deep Purple, and he proved himself a man up to that challenge time-andtime again. While his stint with the Purple People may have only lasted for two memorable albums (hey, check out **Burn** if you crave a dose of superlative rock and roll craftsmanship), his time with that regal British band led directly to the Yorkshire-born Coverdale starting a unit of his own... one named in typical tongue-in-cheek fashion after his favorite male body part, Whitesnake.

'After my time with Purple, I knew it was time

to step out and try

then-wife. band.

> The Snake doing a hair commercial.

actress Tawnie Kitaen, writhing seductively on

the roof, hood, and bumper of a customized Jag during a series of the Snake's MTV-ready videos.

No matter how you may choose to reflect upon the musical accomplishments of this highly distinctive hair metal band, however, one fact is beyond debate- in look, sound and image this was one group that stood head-and-shoulders above many of their era's hard rocking compatriots. And perhaps that was with good reason. After all, Coverdale's pedigree hadn't exactly been earned with some something on my own," he said "Whitesnake

came together rather gently. My first project was a solo album that I released under that name, and many of the musicians involved in that album

decided to stay on and form the initial version of that

In all honesty, that first version of Whitesnake- featuring guitarists Mickey Moody and Bernie Marsden, bassist Neil Murray and drummer David Dowle- failed to generate much interest outside of the British Isles, where their cover of Ain't No Love in the Heart of the City became a minor hit. Even the addition of once-and-future Purple members- keyboard wiz Jon Lord and drummer Ian Paice- for such albums as **Trouble** and **Lovehunter** did little to raise the band's public profile above those of countless other rather pedestrian blues/rock bands that were

then clogging hard rock's musical arteries. Sure, Coverdale's rugged vocals made everyone who heard them stand up and take notice, but in an era dominated by the likes of a still-vibrant Zeppelin and a Paul Rodgers-led Bad Company, the Snake's sound often paled in comparison.

"Those were good times, yet they were also rather frustrating,"





hen the now-legendary New Wave of British Heavy Metal first hit big-time back in the early '80s, there were a few clear-cut, can't-miss "winners" in the bunch. Along with such side-bar success stories as Tygers of Pan Tang and Saxon were the likes of future sales champs Def Leppard. But unquestionably the leader of that metal pack was a rough-and-ready band from the outskirts of London known as Iron Maiden— a unit that pulled no punches when it came time to deliver their potent guitar-laden musical message.

Drawing upon the noble traditions of earlier Brit-metal acts like Sabbath and Zeppelin, and adding their own highly literate, overtly cerebral flair to the mix (most created by the lyrical wizardry of the band's founder/bassist, Steve Harris), the Maiden Metal Machine quickly established themselves as one of the most potent forces ever to emerge on the rock and roll scene. Such efforts as **The Number of the Beast, Powerslave** and **Piece of Mind** perfectly mixed the band's metallic sensibilities with their quasi-mystical bent to create some of the hard rock form's most compelling album presenta-

"We always viewed ourselves as s thing of a different breed of metal

"We always viewed ourselves as something of a different breed of metal band," Harris said.

"Even in the beginning our aspirations were a little bigger than those of most other bands. We didn't want to write three minute radio songs. We wanted to create multi-dimensional metal opuses. We enjoyed touching on mystical and mythological topics, and placing them right along-side songs that dealt with many of today's most pressing issues. We really liked seeing how interesting and unusual we could make our material, and still keep it as Iron Maiden. That was a big part of the fun for us—there were no rules with our music. We were free to do anything we wanted. Over the years, I think we've been able to temper some of our more ambitious sides with a more commercial understanding. That's what has allowed us to grow and prosper for so long."

While throughout the years the band suffered through innumerable personnel shifts (with at least a dozen different members floating through the Maiden ranks at one time or another), the core of their "legendary" lineup—Harris, vocalist Bruce Dickinson, drummer Nicko McBrain, guitarist Dave Murray and guitarist Adrian Smith—remains intact. Indeed the band's recent flurry of releases, including a variety of live and studio "Greatest Hits" compilations that commemorated their 25th Anniversary in 2005, as well as

their new **A Matter of Life and Death**, have served to introduce the heavy-handed work of this unique metal contingent to a new generation of headbangers. It puts a smile on Harris' face to know that so many years after first launching Maiden on the world, his brain-child not only remains as vital and vibrant as ever, but that their place in metal history is now secure.

"When we first came on the scene, our kind of music was just totally out of fashion," Harris said. "In some ways, it's similar to the way the music scene is now. The bands that were popular in England at the Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, and they were ready to start making their own music— and we were one of them.

"I think any band that reached a level of success in the '80s has a bit of a complex to overcome. We've always been quite sure of ourselves, but considering that we came along in the shadows cast by the likes of Sabbath you can't consider yourself to be a truly great band. It's been up to the fans supporting us for so many years to finally convince us of that. We see them everywhere

dinosaurs whose time had come and gone. But what those people didn't realize

was that there was a new generation of bands that had grown up listening to

we go in their Maiden T-shirts, and it never fails to put a smile on my face."

Indeed, much can be read about someone who chooses to wear an Iron

Maiden T-shirt as a fashion statement— especially one of those long-sleeve
types with the band's distinctive block-letter logo on the front and the hideous

face of their skeletal mascot, Eddie, on the back. If they're with a date— especially if it's in the neighborhood mall or on the way to a chic-flick movie screening— it loudly and proudly proclaims that the wearer has no interest in being there. If, however, that saidsame garment is worn when attending a rock concert— be it a Maiden show or a performance by just about another other metal band on Planet Earth— it boldly states that its wearer clearly knows their stuff about great rock and roll.

"We do see those shirts everywhere," Harris said. "And it's not just at one of our shows. They have become a fashion statement of sorts. When you see someone wearing an Iron Maiden T-shirt, it is a very loud and clear statement about who and what they are. We're very proud of that. The kind of music we play has had a long tradition of going underground for a long period then suddenly reemerging stronger than ever. Punk music has done much the same thing. It never goes away— it just lies in wait out of the public eye. Metal always comes back."

Despite the impressive number of platinum-coated, arena-packing accomplishments that have already come their way, and no matter how many of those achievements are still yet to come, the fact is that Maiden's lasting impact on the rock world may well be their desire to be heavy metal's first truly international band. While some of their vaunted European predecessors certainly had their moments in the sun in both North America and the Orient, it was Maiden that truly made the world their oyster. They ostensibly turned their backs on the lucrative American market at times to focus on conquering new frontiers in South America, Australia and Eastern Europe. It was as if these quintessential British bashers viewed themselves as heavy metal's self-appointed ambassadors to the universe. And while the money was certainly good in

these new markets, the band insists that their quest was motivated far more by adventure than by financial gain.

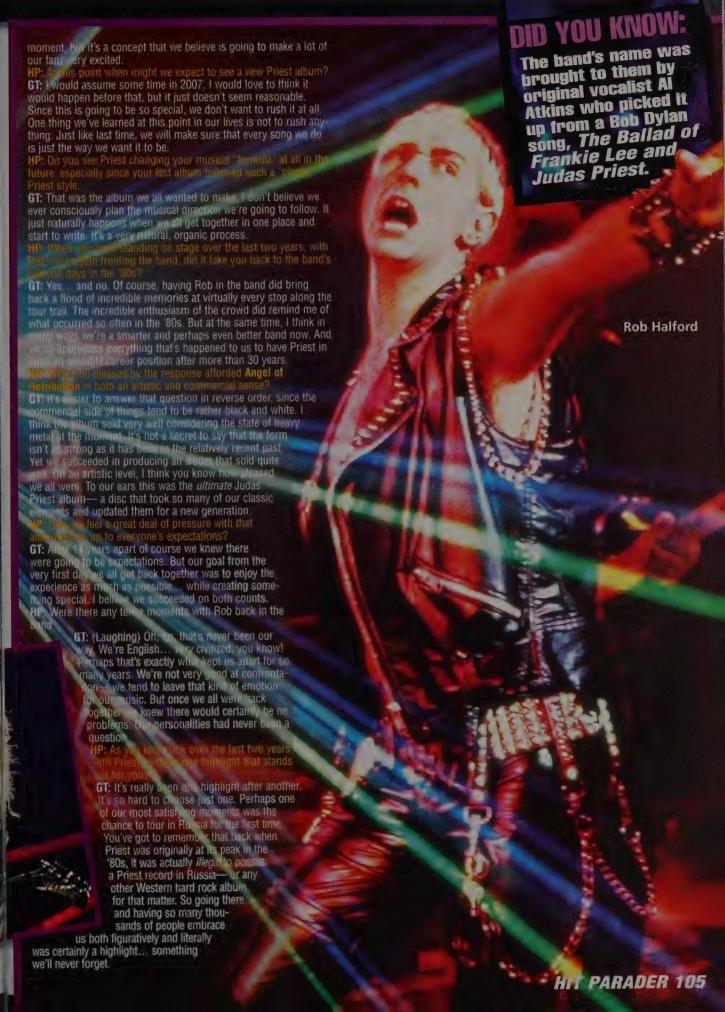
"I can guarantee you that there were times when we played places like Poland or Czechoslovakia when we could have made more money just hanging out in a pub back in London," Harris stated. "It wasn't the pay that got us on the road in those places—it was more our desire to get out and go to where no other band had been before. There are metal fans everywhere, and we felt they deserved the chance to hear some music played live. That was, is and will always be Iron Maiden's job."

well as

Their legendary
Soundhouse Tapes (which
helped land them a
record deal) were named
after a popular English
heavy metal club.









'We've seen so

many tends

come and go

oblivious of all

of them."

rom the moment they first burst on the scene in the late '70s, AC/DC stood markedly apart from virtually every other band that ever emerged in the rock and roll world. In sound and spirit these Australian rockers were as far removed from the British blues wailers and the American riff merchants of the era as a hard rock band could get. In pint-sized guitar hero Angus Young, AC/DC had a truly revolutionary performer— a virtuoso talent who happened to dress in shorts and a school boy's cap. In original vocalist Bon Scott, they had the quintessential rock and roll bad boy, a barechested, tattooed beat messiah who truly had been "around the world, and

knew a million girls

But just as AC/DC was reaching their commercial peak in the early '80s, after albums like High Voltage, Powerage and Highway To Hell had begun to knock down every barrier placed in their path, Scott's life came to an abrupt and unexpected end. Apparently the hard drinking, hard living vocalist had decided to camp out in the back seat of his car after a particularly heavy night of imbibing. A cold snap came through, and before morning, Scott had passed on due to hypothermia. Almost instantly Scott was transformed by the ever-unpredictable rock media from being an occasionally maligned source of amusement into one of the patron saints of the then-burgeoning hard rock form. But at the same time, Angus and the boys were left without their spiritual and physical leader. They didn't

know what to do. After years of just getting on stage and letting the chips fall where they may, AC/DC were facing the first true crisis of their career. For a number of months they considered breaking up the band. But finally cooler

heads prevailed.

"That was an incredibly hard time for us," Angus recalled. "When Bon died, we really didn't know what to do. We had just started having some real success due to **Highway To Hell**, and everything seemed to be going our way. Then all of a sudden Bon was gone, and so were a lot of our dreams."

Then all of a sudden Bon was gone, and so were a lot of our dreams."

After a lengthy period of emotional recovery and introspection, the band decided to hire former Geordie vocalist Brian Johnson and head almost immediately back into the recording studio. They wanted to keep as busy as possible in order to keep the heartbreaking memories of Scott out of their minds. Almost as if to wash the tragic event out of their system, the band chose to record their entire next album as a homage to Scott, little knowing that the disc in question, Back in Black, would soon emerge as one of the landmark achievements in rock and roll history. The album, spurred on by songs like the title track and Hells Bells, proceeded to sell over 10 million

copies world-wide, establishing AC/DC as the biggest hard rock band anywhere. While, more than two decades later, Angus still has trouble fully comprehending the band's "overnight" success, he knows that Bon would have been proud.

"What happened with **Back in Black** was simply

"What happened with **Back in Black** was simply amazing," he said. "Everything just came together. Brian was a real trooper. He was stepping into a very difficult spot, but he handled it very well."

Indeed, as AC/DC hit the road for their first headlining tour of arenas in the wake of **Back in Black**'s success, Johnson's appearance on stage was frequently met with cries of "We Want Bon." Rather than being offended by the crowd's response, the heavily-accented resident of Glasgow would often simply reply "I want Bon, too." From there, however, things only got better, by tour's end, AC/DC had hit a musical peak that they had never achieved with the charismatic but unpredictable Scott. Angus further established himself as one of the most inventive and entertaining guitar forces in rock history, and the band's reputation quickly evolved into that of the unmatched masters of riff rock.

By the late-¹80s, as AC/DC's commercial fortunes continued to rise, countless young bands began to emerge, each trying to capture at least some element of AC/DC's special magic. Inevitably, they all failed. They may have grabbed one element or another of the group's superfi-

have grabbed one element or another of the group's superficially simplistic style, but they all seemed to miss completely on capturing the unique internal chemistry that had always made AC/DC so special. And ever the ensuing years, through albums like For Those About To Rock, Fly On The Wall and Flick Of The Switch, and Ball Breaker, the Thunder From Down Under continually set the standards against which every fun-loving, riffrocking band had to be measured. And just as surely as each AC/DC disc would feature that ever-so-familiar approach to rock and roll, the wait between discs began getting longer and longer.

Never the fastest-working band in the land, in the 21 Century AC/DC's work rate has slowed to a vertable crawl. In 2001 the band released their most recent collection, **Stiff Upper Lip**, and a year later they left Warner Music—their home for more than 25 years—to sign a new deal with Epic Records. We're still

waiting to experience the first tangible result of that signing. But Angus promises that we shouldn't give up hope... new AC/DC music is on the way! And we know one thing for sure—whenever that new album does arrive, it will have been well-worth waiting for! After nearly 30 years of creating an unmatched musical legacy, and helping to establish a brand of rock and roll that will seemingly live on forever, what possibly does AC/DC feel they still have to contribute to the musical form they love so dearly? Such a question just brings a knowing smile to Angus' mischievous face.

"We're going to do what we always do," he said. "We've seen so many tends come and go. And the best part is that we've managed to stay happily oblivious of all of them. I think we can still do it better than anybody else. That's

not bragging-that's just a fact!"

A fact, indeed! Through thick and thin, good times and bad, AC/DC have survived and prospered, giving us all a unique taste of rock and roll that only

they could provide. They are the unquestioned kings of heavy riff rock—a band that has done nore with a basic three-chord arrangement than any other group in rock history. They have never been the haughty Rock Gods like Zeppelin and Sabbath. Rather, they are the blue collar lads with whom you'd enjoy downing a pint or three down at the corner pub. For AC/DC, rock and roll has never been a quest for artistic evolution or creative revolution; it's been about perfecting the one thing that they've always done better than anyone. It worked in 1978, it worked in 1988, it worked in 1998, and we have no doubt that it will work just as well in 2008!

ndmark survived and prospered, y songs like the

Two other members of the Young clan have been involved with the group's career—older brother George produced their early albums and cousin Stevie replaced Malcolm during one American tour.



HP SALUTES THE COULER MISTICAL MISTICAL

hese days, the members of Slayer can barely control their enthusiasm.

And, come to think of it, in mid-2006 these ultimate metal masters do indeed have much to be tweaked about. If headlining their own hugely successful "festival", *The Unholy Alliance*, wasn't enough to satisfy their riff-craving souls, then the arrival of their first album in almost five years should certainly do the trick. For nearly 25 years Slayer have been the most infamous proponents of metal's most blatant, over-aggressive, faster-than-light "underground" style. And with their recent flurry of activity, it seems certain that these vintage Master Blasters are well on their way to reclaiming their metallic crown from any and all weak-kneed 21st Century pretenders to their throne.

Indeed, nobody has *ever* been able to hold a candle to Slayer in terms of pure metallic bombast. From Day One they've been loud, they've been nasty, they've been obnoxious and perhaps most importantly, they've been real. Throughout the years—through shifting musical trends, and evolving rock atti-

tudes— Slayer have steadfastly remained true to the wall-shaking, heart-quaking principles that every metal maven holds sacred.

On such albums as **South Of**

Heaven, Seasons In The Abyss and their classic Reign In Blood,

vocalist Tom Araya and guitarists Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman (along with an oft-changing array of drummers that now finally seems settled with the return of Dave Lombardo) created an intense, unforgiving metal style that simultaneously drew the undying loyalty of metal die-hards and the unmitigated wrath of musical— and political— conservatives. In fact, long before the likes of Slipknot began focusing the ire of those possessing a strong right wing bent, there was Slayer, being picketed, being threatened and being challenged. Not only did they stand up to all such misplaced jibes, they continually fought back through word and action to emerge victorious. Their bold defiance, as well as their powerful, uncompromising musical stance, helped turn these So Cal amp assassins into international icons, heavily influencing both successive generations of European death metal druids and State-side riff-rock merchants.

But let's face it. That was then—this is *now!* And despite a recent renaissance of the form, today's metal scene is often a pale reminder of the power and glory that once defined the hard rock empire— a time when major labels battled with one another to sign top hard rock attractions and concert promoters positively fawned over the style's biggest stars. Today bands that rock loudly and proudly are often relegated to a lifetime spent on smaller labels and partaking in minor tours where they battle with one another for survival. How sad. How pathetic. How down-right wrong! Well, folks, it's time for a change, and who

better to help lead metal's charge back up the rock and roll mountain than the Kings Of Crunch themselves! Yup, Slayer are back with not only their first new studio disc since 2001's **God Hates Us All**, but also their own festival-style tour, *The Unholy Alliance*, where this West Coast Blast Bunch helps open the doors for upstarts such as Mastodon and Lamb of God. Clearly, in 2006 the time of metallic redemption is at hand!

"We're really jacked about this album," Araya said.
"It took us a long time to get it together, but to us it's
the best thing that we've ever done. It has all the elements of classic Slayer—the things that our fans clear-

ly expect from us— yet it also has a lot of different things that really open up a lot of new doors."

Recorded over an eight month period beginning late last year, their new Josh Abraham-produced disc finds Slayer exploring exciting new metallic terrain. While the guitars are still unmistakably heavy, the lyrics characteristically chilling and the vocals traditionally harrowing, housed within Slayer's latest store of killer riffs are just enough fresh elements to keep the "new school" metal wolves at least somewhat satisfied. No, Slayer certainly haven't sold out to the new-age revisionists or the techno/industrial elite, and they have filled such songs as Catalyst, Jihad and Eyes of the Insane with more than their allotted degree of pure, "classic metal" bluster. But what else would you expect from Slayer? According to Araya, while the band has made no conscious effort to update their sound and modernize their metallic style, the evolutionary changes that can occur with time and the nature of human events have together served to slightly alter the group's fundamental approach.

"We're still Slayer, and that just about says it all," the

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vocalist said. "I think each of our albums have been a little different. There's always been arouth in whatever we've

growth in whatever we've done. But with the passage of a

lot of time between our last two albums we've tried to bring a few new things into the basic Slayer approach. I think we've done it— and done it in a really interesting and effective way."

Throughout their latest opus, the Slayer brigade continually test the known limits of the heavy metal form, prodding and poking pre-ordained boundaries with their frenzied instrumental forays and cutting vocal tirades. While this time around some long-time group followers may have some initial resistance to a few aspects of the band's chosen approach, the vast majority of Slayer's followers will be in total ecstasy when they're overwhelmed by the group's wall-shaking guitar runs and incessantly abusive rhythms. Unquestionably this is Slayer at their best—daring, dashing and, as always, devilishly heavy.

For Slayer, the next challenge may well be to see how their new music fits into their 90 minute *Unholy Alliance* live set. Araya (who's still recovering from recent gall bladder surgery)insists that the somewhat different attitude presented on some of the new material will perfectly reflect and enhance Slayer's time-tested concert favorites. But the band members know full-well

that it won't be until they stand on stage, with 20,000 screaming fans in front of them, that the true reaction to their latest dose of metal magic will become totally clear.

"That is the best test," Araya said. "You can spend weeks or months in the studio, but until a song gets played live in front of a crowd, you really don't get a real read on it. You can't fall in love with the idea of getting overly fancy in the studio because you've got to be able to reproduce it on stage. I don't think there'll be much of a problem with the new stuff because it's classic Slaver. We think the fans will love it."

DID YOU KNOW:

Slayer has continually run afoul of conservative groups thanks to songs like Angel of Death (which examined the hideous practices of Nazi Josef Mengele) and Jihad (which takes on the sacred subject of 9/11 from the terrorist's point of view.)





MTAMA

about Metallica. Their albums, like Kill
'Em All, ...And Justice For All and their
dual chart-toppers Load and Reload,
were like cosmic bolts of lightning, discs
that struck the human eardrum as if
Thor's hammer itself had delivered the
blow. Throughout the years, as drummer Lars Ulrich, guitarist/vocalist
James Hetfield and guitarist Kirk
Hammett (along with a variety of
bassists, most recently Rob Trujillo)
have gone through personal problems
and chart-topping triumphs, their
stage attire has always remained the
same— black jeans, black T-shirts
and lots of sweat— though in recent
days their incredible stage sets have
advanced rock technology to the
space age. It's a formula that's
worked, for over the years Metallica

has grown from being a band that had to struggle to attain a major label contract into a unit capable of filling the biggest stadiums in the world. With all that in mind, we present the one and only Metallica... In Their Own Words.

"We've always gone about our business without paying too much attention to anything else. Our lives have expanded over the years to include families and outside interests, but Metallica is still so central to what we do. That's never going to change."

LARS UĽRICH

who are waiting for us to do something new."

JAMES HETFIELD

"This isn't the same music world that existed ten or fifteen years ago... and that's cool. Back then metal kids have very closed eyes and ears to anything that didn't fit into their perspectives of what a metal and was supposed to be. Those days are gonn. Today's fans are more

"When we get together the music is always special. We can fall into the groove so quickly. I don't think very much about this band has ever really been planned. Stuff just sort of happens. You can't really plan what we do, you've gotta kind of let it happen, then react to it. I guess after all this time we just kind of think alike."

KIRK HAMMETT

"We spent a lot of time over the last few years working hard that's taken a lot of the negative energy that's propelled us along throughout our career and turned it completely around. But all you've got to do is listen to the music to know that the energy may be coming from a different place—but the net result is the same. We're fueled by positive energy now, and we've used that to make music that takes us back to playing the way that's the most natural and effortless for us. The funny thing is that a lot of people think that we have to be filled with a lot of negativity to make great music. Obviously, we don't."

"Touring across America during the summer has become a tradition for us. We've done it after every album we've released during the last 20 years, and it's unquestionably the best way of introducing a new album to as many fans as possible. None of us can wait to start playing the new stuff live and see how people react to it. But I've also got to say that there's a part of me that is extra-excited because it's almost like we have something to prove again. We want to go out there and show everyone that Metallica s still as strong as ever.'

JAMES HETFIELD

The beauty of being in a band like Metallica is music. If we want to do cover tunes, we can. If we that too. There are no limits. But this time, as we got back together after a break, we wanted to see where direction it did-which was back to Metallica music in

"I believe we'd always prefer if everyone focused in on our music rather than anything else. Metallica has always been about setting rock and roll precedents-not about setting fashion or cultural precedents. And as far as the music goes I think there are many direct links between the music the band is making now and the music they made in the past. The energy level is still there. KIRK HAMMETT

"We've never listened that closely to what other people said about us - either good or bad. The best part about Metallica is that we've

ID YOU KNOW:

The band relocated from Los Angeles to San Francisco in the early '80s basically to make it easier for bassist Cliff Burton to join the group.

our own little world, and we've been last 25 years. That doesn't mean that we world, because we really do. But even



"Our fans know what we're about and what motivates us. Everyone knows that selling a lot of albums has never been what Metallica's about. In fact, there have been people in the past who criticized us for being so totally non-commercial. We didn't release singles to radio and we didn't even do videos for a long time. Believe me, we never set out to be successful— so we're as surprised as anyone by what's happened.

LARS ULRICH

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

HP SALUTES THE UER MET

t was late in the summer of 2005, and Anthrax' Scott lan sat on a bench in his band's surprisingly quiet pre-concert dressing room thumbing through the pages of a sports magazine. Wearing a New York Yankees T-shirt, his head glistening with that freshly-shaved look, lan was a far cry from the image of the quintessential Rock God. But did he care? Nah. With his goodnatured smile in place, and a feeling of contentment surrounding lan and his band's then-recently reunited "classic" '80s Among the Living lineup, it would seem as if all was as well as it could possibly be in the world of Anthrax.

Come to think of it, make that all was *amazingly* well. Ian and his reformed bandmates had seemingly picked up where they left off over a decade ago, barely missing a beat in the process. Despite the well-documented internal problems that had blown this version of Anthrax asunder at the height of their acclaim, it clearly appeared as if everyone was intent on making the most of this "second chance" opportunity. As they traversed along their reunion tour trail, one would have been hard pressed to sense anything but a budding state of euphoria surrounding the Anthrax gang. Performing together on stage on a nightly basis had clearly brought out the best in this timeless New York-based metal outfit. And it seemed as if Anthrax— guitarist Ian, bassist Frank Bello, drummer Charlie Benante, vocalist Joey Belladonna and guitarist Danny Spitzhad once again begun solidifying into a

tight, seamless

"Right now I'm still recovering from the whole Supergroup thing."

unit... something that Ian freely admitted hadn't always been

the case at times in Anthrax's long and storied past.

It's very nice that everyone seems to be on the same page of their playbook on this tour," the axe master said. "It's no secret that there have been times in the past when that hasn't been true. If you go back a number of years ago, we occasionally had problems with Joey, and Danny sometimes didn't have the same enthusiasm he once had. But now, it's like everyone has a new attitude; it's amazing. We don't know where this is going in terms of a long-term thing, but it's working really great right now. There have been times in the past when touring had been a grind, and there had been times when it was total fun—this is one of those really fun times.

Unfortunately, after their summer-long run, the members of Anthrax' "classic' 1980's lineup once again went their separate ways... at least for the time being. While Ian busied himself taping VH1's Supergroup TV series (where he shared a house, a band and a mini-tour with the likes of guitarist Ted Nugent, vocalist Sebastian Bach, bassist Evan Seifeld and drummer Jason Bonham) the rest of his Anthrax crew waited to see in which direction the band would next travel. Would they continue to mine the good fortunes presented by their brief but highly satisfying headline-grabbing reunion, or would they return to working with vocalist John Bush, the frontman who helped direct all of the band's '90s efforts? It was a guestion even the ever-insightful Mr. Ian didn't seem prepared to answer.

Right now I'm still recovering from the whole Supergroup thing," he said. "It was such a blast. Living in that house, and having people like Ted to jam with was really amazing. I loved it. There will be a time to turn my attention back towards Anthrax, but that's not right now.'

No matter what direction the band may take in the months and years ahead, it

seems an almost undeniable notion that it was during the '80s that Anthrax made their greatest impression upon the metal masses. They scored big on album after album, but the internal pressures continued to build to a bursting point. Indeed, when Belladonna and then Spitz split the Anthrax fold in the early-'90s, it seemed as if few tears were shed among either the band's remaining members or the group's ever loyal fans. But despite the acclaim the band has enjoyed over the last decade with Bush as their frontman, for many long-time Anthrax followers, the classic lineup that produced such discs as State of Euphoria and the aforementioned Among the Living has never been matched—either in energy or

So what are the odds of this most beloved and respected version of Anthrax actually sticking together for the long haul and recording a new album in 2006? Apparently only time will tell. Obviously, much has changed both within the band, and within the American heavy metal scene, since these quintessential Noo Yawk rockers ruled the rock roost back in the late-80s. Credit must go to lan, however, for being the first to realize that a successful reunion could play the same role for Anthrax as previous "reformation" showcases served for the likes of Black

Sabbath, Kiss, Iron Maiden, Motley Crue and Judas Priest. Each of those reunions cast a band on the brink of obscurity back into prime metal prominence. But the guitarist is the first to admit that the decision to reunite on a more permanent basis still isn't particularly easy.

We had already broached the subject of playing some shows with Joey a couple of years ago," he said. "But for those shows he was gonna join the band as it existed recently with John as the

vocalist... and play a few songs with us. It was kind of a 'guest star' spot. But the idea of doing an entire tour together made us all sit back and think. But thankfully we've all grown up a lot over the last 12 years. We all realize the opportunity it presented for us, and for our fans.

Anyone lucky enough to witness Antrax on their reunion tour knows that this is still quite a special unit. From the moment they hit the stage, it was abundantly apparent that things were clicking on all cylinders for this reformed (both literally and figuratively) version of Anthrax. Seamlessly blending classic cuts like Antisocial and Indians with a variety of tracks drawn from throughout the early stages of their career, these Big Apple rockers laid down a blistering array of metallic thunder that had the crowd on its feet from the first musical salvo the band issued. Acting like it was 1988 once again, Belladonna was in total control of the proceedings, joking with the audience, fooling around with his bandmates, and singing the hell out of the band's songs. All-in-all, for those who have closely followed Anthrax' career over the last two

decades, their summer tour ranked as one of the group's crowning achievements... and biggest surprises.

Yeah, we've been surprised," lan said. "We had some questions about how this would work in the beginning. Some of the old things— the good old things— have come back to us really quickly. The magic we once had is back.

D YOU KNOW:

Anthrax single-handedly ushered in the rap/metal movement with their partnership with Public Enemy on Bring the Noise.



DTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

HP SALUTES THE DWED WETAL MO DM: Luckily for Megadeth, I don't think we've ever really been categorized as ave Mustaine was stretched out comfortably in business class, jetting

his way from New York to Los Angeles. Two hours into the lengthy flight, out of pure boredom, he struck up a casual conversation with the nattily-attired business type sitting next to him. After a few minutes of banter covering nothing-in-particular, the fact came to light that not only did the gentleman in the adjoining seat know who Mustaine was, but that he actually worked in the Hit Parader advertising department . "You work for Hit Parader?" Dangerous Dave said with an incredulous look on his face. "Those guys have said some *really* strange things about me over the years." With that, just as the slightest bit of tension began to fill the air, Mustaine broke into a broad smile and added, "But that's okay. Back then they probably had reason to say some of those things. But I'm a different person now- I think they understand that.

There's no doubt that Dave Mustaine has always been one of the more intriguing characters inhabiting the heavy metal universe. From his brief stint in a seminal Metallica, through his various hard-fought (and now victorious) battles against substance abuse, to the string of chart-topping discs like Peace Sells...But Who's Buying and Rust In Peace he's created with Megadeth, Mustaine has continually proven his metal mettle. Throw in for good measure a wide variety of other headline-grabbing incidents-ranging from the 2002 arm injury that threatened to permanently derail his career, to his recent legal battles with long-time bandmate Dave Ellefson- and a fraction of the highly complex Mustaine persona begins to come into sharper focus. So who better than Mr. Mustaine to offer a State of the Metal Union statement?

Hit Parader: How frustrating is it when you hear from some kids that metal supposedly isn't "cool" anymore?

Dave Mustaine: This isn't the first time that the kind of music I like to play hasn't been considered to be very cool by some people. To be honest, I feel kind of comfortable when we're the underdogs. I like selling a lot of albums and playing in front of big crowds, but there's something to a challenge that's very exciting. This kind of music has been around a long time, and I don't see it going away ever!

HP: Do you feel we're ready for a metal resurgence in America?

DM: Just the other day someone asked me if I felt the pressure of trying to save heavy metal. It really made me laugh. Hey, I'm just a skinny guy from Southern California. Do you really think I'm able to do something like that? It's not up to me to do that, even if I felt I could. If heavy metal, hard rock-or whatever you want to call it- is going to make a comeback it's really up to the fans. If they buy the music, the record companies will open their ears and put out more of it. I think it really is that simple. But if we're all going to save heavy metal, I think there is a serious battle ahead of us.

HP: It does seem, however, that a lot of bands that proudly waived the metal banner in few years ago now are trying hard to disassociate themselves from

DM: That's true, and it really bothers me. There were guys in bands that I really respected who now have cut their hair and started saving, "Oh, we always were alternative." Well, they weren't always alternative, and by saying that they're proving to me that they never had any real commitment to the kind of music they were playing. They're just out to cash in any way they can, and while I'm the first to say that this is a business and you've got to do whatever is necessary to make things work, I don't believe you can lose your integrity like that. HP: Do you view your metallic reputation as somewhat limiting?

just a metal band. My biggest influences were Led Zeppelin and the Beatles, and there have always been elements of everything from jazz to classical in our music. It's true that what emerges in the end tends to be quite heavy, but we're proud of that. No matter how many new elements we bring into the music, no matter how many new studios we try and how many new producers we bring in, the basic focus of Megadeth remains the same.

HP: While metal continues to struggle in America, it seems it is really exploding

DM: It is. I noticed that the last time that we toured over there a few years back. We've always had a pretty loyal following in Europe, but last time we were getting to play certain places over there for the first time. We did our first

To be honest, I feel kind of comfortable when we're the underdogs."

tour through Greece, and that was a kick. There are towns in Germany where we had never been before, and we finally got into Poland as well. We had chances to play there years ago when it was still behind the Iron Curtain. That kind of bothered me. I don't like going into places where I'm not that sure of coming out with all the same equipment I went in with. Anyway, those places are so poor that you can really take a financial bath going in there. You want to play for the fans, but you don't want to lose \$100,000 in the process.

HP: As you tour, do you find it more and more difficult to present a show that gives a true overview of Megadeth's entire career?

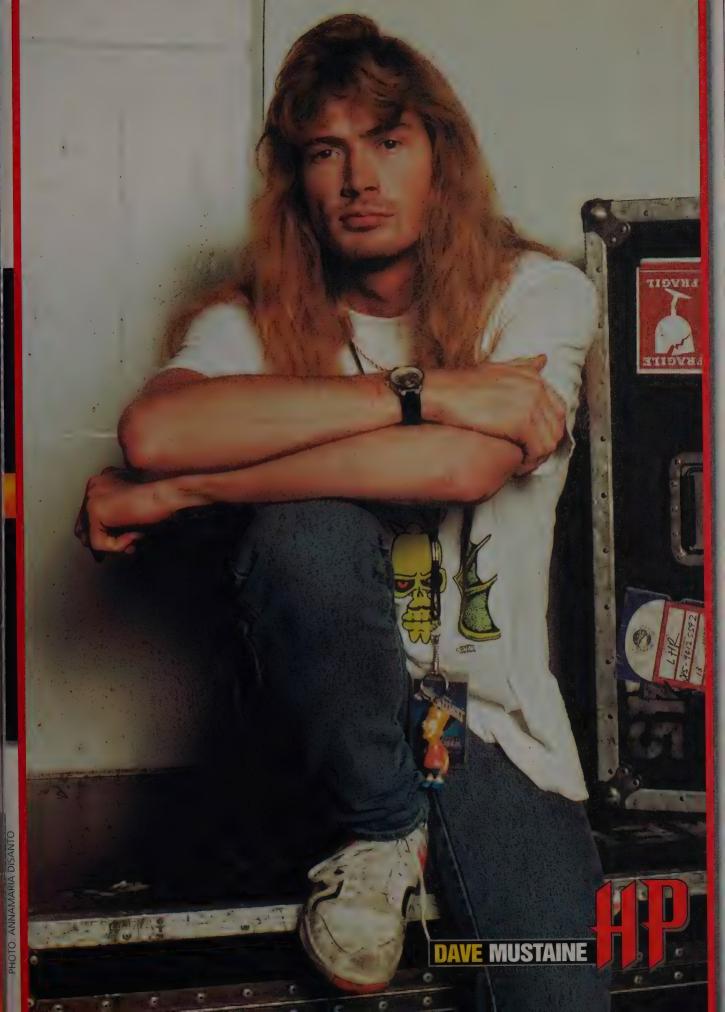
DM: What we tend to do is take the two or three best-known songs from each album and then round out the set with a few newer songs. The only album we don't play anything from is our very first one, and the reason we do that is because the record label has made it unavailable in many places. Playing those songs would be like having Cindy Crawford stand on stage and lift up her shirt. It would be a tease because you know you can't get that. So we just stick to what we know the fans like to hear, and what they probably can pick up in their local record stores.

HP: As you look back over the last 20-plus years, and consider all that you've gone through, are you amazed that you've come through it all as well as you

DM: In a lot of ways I am a very different person than I was. But in some others I'm still the same. I don't sit around guzzling cognac anymore—but the intensity I bring to the music may even

be more focused than it was earlier in my career. I went through the gamut— living fast and playing hard. Others did it too, but they became a parody of themselves and fell by the wayside. We're still around because we respect ourselves and our fans. There are only a couple of bands who have been doing this as long and as hard as

Mustaine suffered a arm wrist injury in 2002 which forced Dangerous Dave to announce his "retirement"— temporarily threatening Megadeth's career.

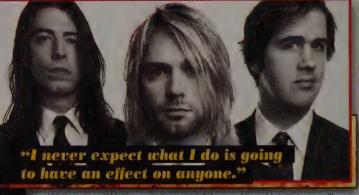


HP SALUTES TH

NG OF KINGS

hen Nirvana's first major label album, Nevermind, was unleashed upon an unsuspecting world in 1991, few could have gauged the degree of societal, cultural and musical impact it would have upon the American rock and roll landscape. At that time, the last vestiges of the '80s hair-metal movement were still holding court, with bands like Posion, Warrant and Motley Crue still believing the world was theirs for the taking. Within months, the face of the contemporary music scene was to be forever changed by the ground-breaking efforts brought forth by vocalist/quitarist Kurt Cobain, drummer Dave Grohl and bassist Krist Novoselic.

"I remember walking into my record label one day after our third album came out." remembers Warrant's vocalist Jani Lane. "We had two consecutive platinum albums, so we were feeling pretty good about ourselves. But as soon as I walked in I heard Nirvana's Smells Like Teen Spirit on the radio, and I noticed that where our poster used to be, there was now one of Alice In Chains. I knew that things had changed overnight— and that it was all because of Nirvana.



While they quickly became the toast of the music world, with best-selling albums, precedent-shattering videos and sold-out tours, the members of Nirvana never embraced what had become accepted as the "rock and roll lifestyle." They shunned the spotlight, shunned the media and shunned the normal perks that were associated with being Rock Gods. Quite simply, in a business too-often filled with egomaniacal performers who are convinced that the stars and planets circle around them, the members of Nirvana stuck out like sore thumbs from the moment they first hit the national scene.

Despite the multi-platinum success of such albums as Nevermind and its follow-up In Utero, as well as the incredible response afforded their revolutionary hit Smells Like Teen Spirit, these Washington state natives always maintained a uniquely non-rock star approach to their sudden and somewhat unexpected acclaim. After all, how many other bands would have turned down the chance to participate in a national stadium tour with the biggest band of their era, Guns 'N Roses, simply because they didn't like that tempestuous act's attitude towards women? And how many other groups became more unwitting and unwilling spokesmen for their generation? There's no denying that Nirvana were a band that seemed determined to stick to their philosophies and perspectives no matter what the commercial consequences may have been.

"I never expect what I do is going to have an effect on anyone," Cobain

said a year before his death. "I can only hope that it might. I think that a lot of the people of this generation have this universal sense of failure that's been brought on by previous generations. I think it's presumptuous to think we can change that through our music.

What was it about Nirvana that made an entire Generation X stand up and take notice? What special quality did they possess that allowed them to transcend the normally stringent bounds of contemporary music and ascend to a loftier plateau? Even prior to the tragic death of Cobain from a self-inflicted gunshot wound in 1994, few could deny that Nirvana had emerged as their era's most important and influential band. While initially some critics surmised that it was merely a well-planned media blitz that had so captured the minds of the teen masses, the truth, as we all now know, was something quite different. Yes, Nirvana was part of a massive label conglomerate, the same people who in their late '80s/early '90s prime also brought you the likes of Guns N' Roses, Whitesnake and Aerosmith. But in point-of-fact, nothing the label could have ever dreamed up would have caused that unique phenomenon known as Nirvana to occur. Now, more than a dozen years after Cobain's death and the band's demise, even those who were most responsible for helping to "break" Nirvana upon an international audience remain astounded by the power of the group's lingering legacy

Indeed, it may very well have been the fact that Cobain, Grohl and Novoselic always appeared so un-hip, so totally unaware of their power, their appearance and their charisma, that was partly responsible for their appeal With their just-rolled-outta-bed hair and bargain bin wardrobes, Nirvana quickly came to represent something special for rock fans of the early '90s. In sharp contrast to the mega-millions spent by most bands for state of the art album and stage productions, Nirvana's attitude was simply, "what you see is what you get." In one memorable interview from 1992, Cobain even went so far as to exalt his band's fondness for playing out of tune.

"So what?" he asked. "We just get on stage and play. If it's out of tune that's okay with us. This isn't supposed to be perfect.

Today, more than 16 years after their first brush with true fame, we can approach the daunting Nirvana legacy with the clear vision of history on our side. By doing so, we begin to get a better view of both this unit's impact on rock and roll history and the role they played in shaping the turbulent and often troubling social mores of the early-90s. While the grunge phenomenon that Nirvana helped launch proved to be, at best, a temporary blip on rock and roll's musical meters, the impact this trio made upon the psyches of a generation of musicians that followed in their wake remains as potent as ever. And, perhaps even more importantly, in Kurt Cobain a younger generation found their "martyr"— one to match rock's previous fallen heroes like Hendrix, Joplin and Morrison.

The fact that to many people rock and roll remains little more than a money making machine is something that Cobain perhaps could never fully understand. His world revolved around art and expression— not fame and fortune. Indeed, it was the "vices" of fame that ultimately did in the tempestuous vocalist. But whether or not one begins to understand Cobain's often troubled mind, nothing should take away from the historic accomplishments of Nirvana. Here was a band for the ages— a group that placed their mark on an era as few bands had ever done before. They may not have wanted to be stars, but that was part of their appeal. They may not have wanted to be the spokesmen for their generation, but that was their fate. They were a very special unit, a band whose likes will not soon pass this way again.





f ever there was a band that was greater than the sum of its individual parts, that band was Alice In Chains. Beyond their instrumental acumen and their abundant vocal skills lurked an almost mystical bond between the group's members, a bond that continually inspired them to reach for heights few other rock acts had ever dreamed of attaining. It was a magic that filled their hard-rocking odes with a razor-edged intensity, while allowing their more plaintive ballads to soar on gossamer wings towards the stratosphere. It was that unmatched duality, as well as the ever-apparent angst that rested so heavily on the group's creative soul that made them one of the keynote bands of their era.

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Indeed, few bands have ever made a more dramatic impact on the rock and roll world than Alice In Chains. From the moment their debut album, Facelift, hit the streets in 1990, it was clear that this darkly moody, slightly sinister, highly inventive Seattle band was out to make a lasting mark for itself in the hard rock hierarchy. Along with fellow Emerald City rockers Pearl Jam, Nirvana and Soundgarden, AIC helped launch and then nurture the so-called "Seattle Scene"— a style that gave sound and substance to the entire

Cobain's tragic death— Staley succumbed to his vices.

"As hard as it may sound, Layne had to live his life," Cantrell said. "It was never our job to monitor him and to tell him what to do. We all have to make decisions. He made his. I loved him like a brother, and I always will. But that didn't give me or anyone else the right to tell him how to live his life. I'll always remember how proud he was when he started playing guitar while we were writing material for Dirt. It really opened up a new world for him. He started writing a lot of songs, and much of the pain that he was feeling came out in those songs. His death is still very much a tragedy to me both personally and professionally. He had so much music to give—and even more to give as a friend."

Even the most cursory listen to the material Alice In Chains created during their career gives a vivid and at times chilling view into the troubled world in which Staley survived, and at times even prospered. While there was always a discordant, somewhat chilling feel to much of the band's material—often attributable to Cantrell's unique guitar tunings—when Staley began to bear his soul through song, the Chains' musical message became among the most compelling

I KNOW WHET ALICE IN CHAINS MEANS TO A LOT OF PEOPLE."

early-'90s rock world. To anyone with eyes and ears, it seemed as if the Chains had it all; in vocalist Layne Staley they possessed a dynamic frontman whose often unpredictable nature only added to his mystique. In guitarist Jerry Cantrell they had a trend-setting axe master with an unquestioned flair for the dramatic. And in drummer Sean Kinney and bassist Mike Inez they enjoyed a rock-solid rhythm section that served as the immovable foundation for the band's high-flying melodies.

"I am very proud of the stand we made," Cantrell said. "We took the opportunity that was given us and we made the most of it. I'm as big a fan of the band as anyone, so I think I know what Alice In Chains means to a lot of people. But all I can say is that everyone should just enjoy listening to the music we made as much as we enjoyed making it."

Of course, as anyone even remotely familiar with the Chains story knows, the band's tale was one not filled exclusively with platinum albums and sold-out tours. There was a darker side to AlC as well. Throughout the band's relatively short history, stories of Staley's off-stage excesses filled the rock gossip wires, with his various nasty habits serving on numerous occasions to derail the band's best-laid recording and touring plans. Somehow, for years the band managed to successfully battle against the grain, overcoming their singer's ever-more obvious personal shortcomings to continually produce incredible music—the material contained on such efforts as **Dirt** and **Jar Of Flies**. But finally, following the release of their last disc, 1996's **Alice in Chains**, it appeared that the proverbial writing was finally inscribed on the wall in non-erasable ink. By then Staley's health had deteriorated to the point where he was no longer able to tour on a consistent basis, and even spending time in the recording studio became a major ordeal both for the singer and his ever-wary bandmates. Finally, on April 4, 2002— exactly eight years after Kurt

and agonizing in the rock world. Each lyric was like a sordid view into Staley's tortured soul, and those brave enough to wallow in the musical mire along with the vocalist came away comprehending at least some of his emotional duress.

Unfortunately, the dire straights that allowed the band to pour so much unbridled emotion directly into their music also proved to be their downfall. By the time Cantrell announced plans for his first solo disc in 1998, it appeared that Alice In Chains had reached a premature— and quite permanent— end of the road. But it wasn't until Staley passed away that rumors concerning a band reunion tour were finally silenced. Even with the recent stirrings within the band's camp that has seen them regroup with a new singer for a series of tours, things will never be quite the same for AIC.

"We never closed the door on the band until we had to," Cantrell said in 2004. "Why should we? There was no point in doing that. If we had chosen to do more work, if Layne had been up to it, we would have gladly done it. But obviously we never had that opportunity, so I'm quite content to stand on what we accomplished."

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Unquestionably, the band's loyalty to their stricken singer remained a noble and notable badge of rock and roll honor.
Throughout much of their career, the Chains stated repeatedly and unequivocally that they'd rather put their music on permanent hiatus than tamper with the special chemistry they always shared. That was only one of the qualities that made this unique unit so special.

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"Alice In Chains had a lot to offer," Cantrell said. "There was a heavy side to the band, but there was also a softer side as well. It was those two distinct musical personalities living in total harmony that gave the band a lot of its appeal. We got heavy rock fans to listen to our acoustic stuff, and we had fans of lighter rock open up to our heavy side. That was one of the things that always made the band very special to me."



HP SALUTES THE SQS NEATS

t was a little after noon on a warm spring day back in 1993 when Soundgarden's Chris Cornell and Kim Thayil innocently strolled into one of New York City's famed delicatessen restaurants. The rockers plunked themselves down at one of the tiny tables strewn with all sorts of deli fare; bowls bursting with

sour pickles and shiny metal tins filled to the brim with such condiments as mustard, ketchup and relish. The West Coast pair carefully picked up a slightly soiled menu and started to peruse the listings, looking for something

special to satisfy their sophisticated Seattle palates. To their mutual horror, all that confronted their eyes were listings for bizarre and potentially unappetizing selections like cow's tongue and chopped chicken liver, all of which the Big Apple natives seemed

"Every time we make an album the test becomes to present something fresh and exciting as well as something that really turns us on," Cornell said at that time. "I think on a number of the songs we've done we may have gotten away from some of our basic rock structures a little too much—even though we were all very pleased

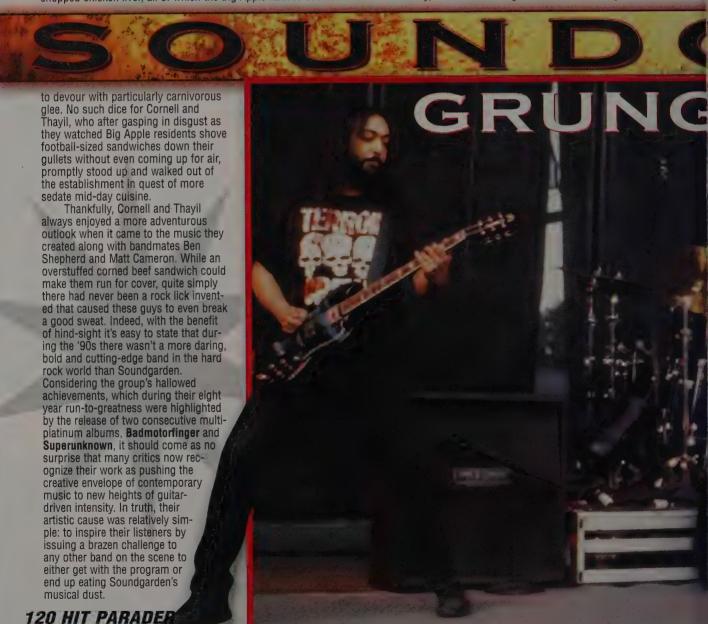
with the results we achieved."

It always seemed downright

silly to debate the merits of Soundgarden's rock attack with Cornell, who in recent days has enjoyed great success at the helm of the million-selling super-

group, Audioslave. After all, who knew the band's music better than the man who had been at Soundgarden's helm since their formation in the mid-'80s? If he said that the band may have wandered a bit too far astray, who are we to argue? As one of the original "Seattle

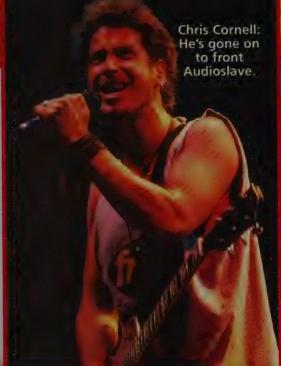
"What Soundgarden accomplished was truly a link between rock's past and its future."



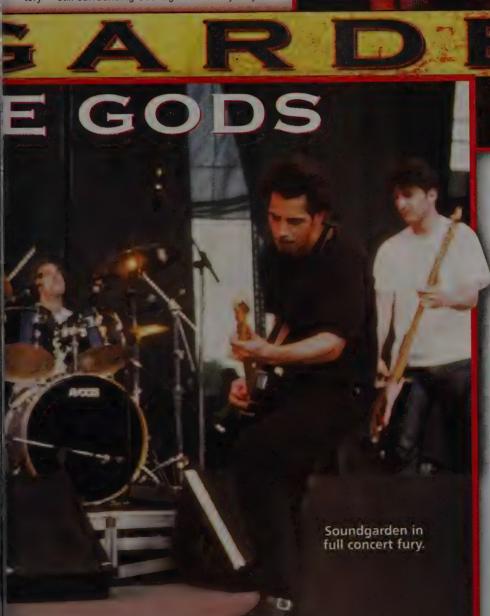
Scene" bands, Cornell and Co. witnessed all of the incredible changes that transpired in rock music at that time, and they played a pivotal role in that evolutionary process. By blending Sabbath-bred guitar heaviness with their distinctly original lyrical and motivational bent, Soundgarden, along with their Emerald City mates in Pearl Jam, Alice in Chains and Nirvana, helped forge The Sound of early '90s hard rock.

"What Soundgarden accomplished was truly a link between rock's past and its future," said a noted West Coast industry insider. "We may not have known it at the time, but they may well have been the most important band of their era. Pearl Jam had more commercial success, and Nirvana got all the press attention, but Soundgarden may have been the most technically proficient of all of them—and they kept the true spirit of rock and roll alive. Some of those bands seemed to have turned their backs on their roots, but Soundgarden was proud of theirs. They were a metal band in many ways, but they were also much more."

Perhaps the greatest irony— and greatest mystery— still surrounding Soundgarden is why they



broke up at the apparent pinnacle of their career in the late '90s. While the rock and roll lives of Alice in Chains and Nirvana were brought to a grinding halt due to death or illness, Cornell as his cohorts chose to go out on their own terms. At that time their songs were still riding at the top of the charts and demand for their live shows stood at an all-time high. Since that



untimely demise, as Soundgarden's legacy has continued to grow, the fate of the band's members have

widely varied. While, as previously mentioned, Cornell has regained all of his commercial and artistic power thanks to Audioslave, the likes of Thayil and Sheppard have been quiet... at best. Cameron has landed on his feet, banging the drums for Pearl Jam as they continue to rock the world.

No matter what else they may each accomplish in the future, however, it seems highly unlikely that the four musicians who comprised Soundgarden will ever again enjoy the kind of Kings of the World status that was once theirs. Quite simply, they were the right band in the right place at the right time— a musical lightning rod for the attitudes and ambitions of a generation. They were the most important band in Seattle at a time when Seattle was the most important city in the rock universe. In Cornell they had perhaps the single most charismatic force ever produced by the Grunge Generation, and in their albums they created a legacy that will be appreciated long after their current roles have run out of steam.

"We did our thing," Cornell summed it up. "That's more than most bands can say. But just as important as knowing when to do something, is knowing when not to. Hopefully, we did that as well."

"Pearl Jar a noted indust had more of at many people, it somewhat young men of lurked right un forget that this one-time NBA made reference the tales of the tales of and l'm Alive?

o band ever fought stardom harder—and more effectively—than Pearl Jam. At the peak of their mid-'90s powers, this Seattle-based grunge unit somewhat unwittingly found themselves as the living, breathing symbols for the changing face of American rock and roll. Emerging from the party-hearty excesses of the '80s, something far more vital, far more substantial was needed to make rock "important" again—and Pearl Jam was the band that helped supply that vitality in their own special way. They never wanted to be stars, never needed to be stars; but make no mistake about it, Pearl Jam were stars in every correct sense of the word. They may have shunned the spotlight

They may have shunned the spotlight like vampires, and they may have turned a cold shoulder towards everyone from the print media to the powerful forces at MTV, but the Jammers still became sensations— and they did it their way! Vocalist Eddie Vedder was chosen by **Time** magazine as the cover boy of their "Generation X" issue, and virtually every utterance made by this oft-

Nirvana may have had more of an impact on ociety, but Pearl Jam reached more people."

unit (also featuring guitarists Mike McCready and Stone Gossard and bassist Jeff Ament), was treated as words from On High by the music-stanced masses

When they were at the apex of their creative powers (which some might argue came with the release of their debut album, **Ten**) there were few bands in rock history that plyed their craft with more anger, aggression and angst that Pearl Jam. In many ways they were the symbols of their times— a band that wore their troubles, their heart-aches and their passions on their musical sleeves— where their legion of followers could easily relate to every emotive cry the PJ brigade put forth. And today, while a bit of the luster may have faded from Pearl Jam's still-luminescent aura, whenever there may be the announcement regarding a new PJ tour or an upcoming band album, it's still more than enough to send millions running to the nearest ATM machine to scratch together the needed cash. Indeed, the power of Pearl Jam's emotion-strewn musical messages is still that powerful.

"Pearl Jam were the most successful rock band of the early-'90s," said a noted industry observer. "No one else even came close. Nirvana may have had more of an impact on society, but Pearl Jam reached more people. To many people, they were grunge—they had the look, the sound, the attitude."

Somewhat ironically, buried beneath their mid-90s status as the angry young men of rock, was a prevalent but often hidden sense of humor that lurked right under Pearl Jam's often misunderstood surface. Hey, let's not forget that this was a band whose original name was Mookie Blaylock (a one-time NBA point guard) and that the title of their multi-platinum debut made reference to the Mookster's jersey number. How did that contrast to the tales of child abuse and personal turmoil that filled such hits as *Jeremy* and I'm Alive?

Perhaps it was this striking dichotomy that served as the foundation of Pearl Jam's appeal—as well as of their continual frustration regarding the way the media often interpreted their heart-wrenching musical missives. Indeed, it often seemed as if this unit was answering to a Higher Authority—a force that kept directing them down the path of greatest resistance. Their cost-saving ticketing practices, their artistic album covers, even the thickness of the vinyl used to make "special pressings" of discs such as **Vitalogy** and **Vs.** became major bones of contention between the band and their media vultures—and each and every one left a more bitter taste in the mouths of both the group and their faithful following.

Now as we sit in the first stages of 2007, and even with the run-away acclaim heaped upon the band's latest disc, **Pearl Jam**, much of this unit's work has been reduced to "classic rock" fodder to be played along-side the likes of Zeppelin and the Doors on various FM radio outlets. The scene and much of the fan-base that first brought them to the pinnacle of fame in the '90s has, for the most part, grown up and moved on—though one would have trouble sensing that from the sold-out status of the group's most recent tour. And let's not for one second forget that this band is the only one that actually survived the fall-out of the Seattle grunge scene. Soundgarden

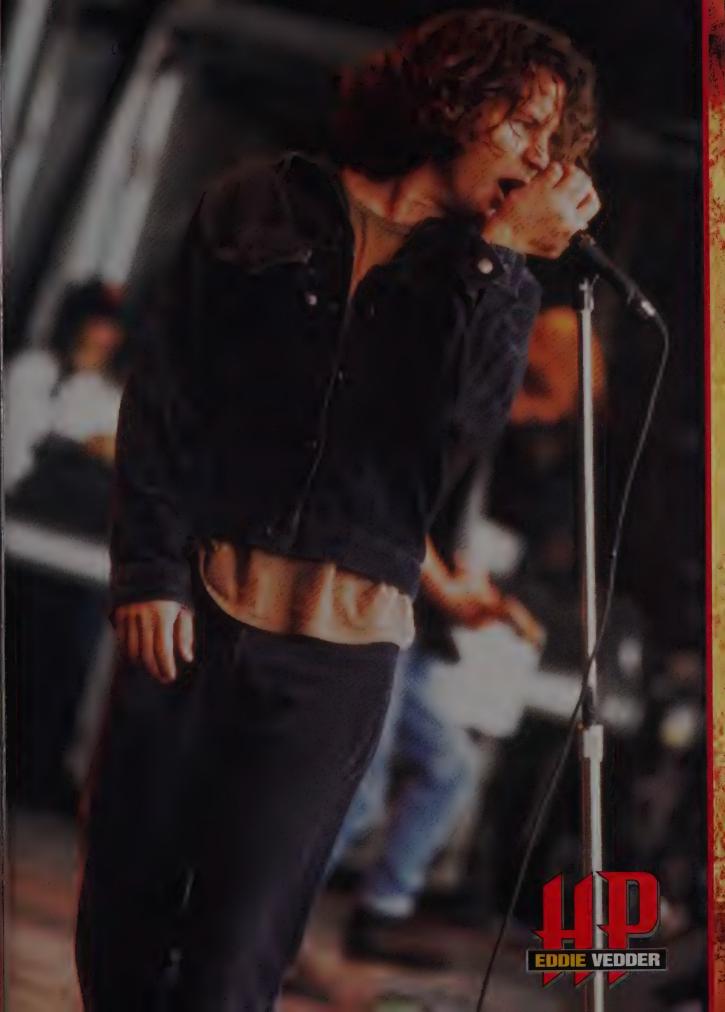
couldn't do it. Neither could Nirvana, Mother Love Bone, nor Alice In Chains. Nope, among the top-level Emerald City acts that controlled the rock scene of the early '90s, only the Jammers have managed to survive and prosper. So what does the future hold for Pearl Jam?

So what does the future hold for Pearl Jam? Apparently no one really knows— including the band members themselves. In recent days their renewed success has served to revitalize everything in and around the PJ empire. However, as they all grow older and wiser, it seems clear that the band's members are more content than ever to sit back and let the whims of rock and roll fate come their way.

Clearly, this unit's true significance—their position in the rock and roll history books—has already been dictated by the vital role they played in helping rock wash away the last vestiges of the '80s hair-metal scene and turning the rock form's followers in a far more emotive, intro-

spective path. While, in all honesty, in recent days the efforts of groups such as Slipknot and Mudvayne have again brought the "theatrical" elements back into the rock game, few can ever forget the true impact of Pearl Jam. They were a band that clearly was in the right place at the right time, helping to lead the Emerald City rock revolution to the top of the charts— at the same time cementing their own place in the rock hierarchy. For that, they will never be forgotten.

"Pearl Jam was a product of their time— just as Hendrix and Zeppelin were," said a source close to the band. "That's when rock and roll truly becomes magical— taking on a truly significant attitude. When you hear the name 'Pearl Jam' you not only think of the great music they've made, and the great music they still will make, but you also think of grunge, of Seattle and the whole way that scene played out in the early '90s. It was one of the most unique times in rock history because the music came first and stardom came second. But it will also be remembered as a time when some of the best music ever recorded came our way— and Pearl Jam was a vital part of that."



EPSALUTES THE SOUS NEATS

he Stone Temple Pilots made a stand that may well last for as long as the rock and roll form itself. During the peak of their mid'90s run, this West Coast based music machine cranked out album after album that married Beatles-styled harmony with
Zeppelin-influenced power to create a sound that became as much a soundtrack for their era as anything done by such headlinegrabbing compatriots as Nirvana or Pearl Jam. But while those grunge greats too often looked at the world with a jaundloed eye
and a frowning face, STP managed to maintain a quixotic smile on their collective mouths... no matter how critical their song

On such albums as Core, Purple and Tiny Music; vocalist Scott Weiland (now with Velvet Revolver), guitarist Dean DeLeo, bassist Rob DeLeo (now with Army of Anyone) and drummer Eric Kretz managed to establish themselves as a band with something Important to say—and a very special way of saying it.

FINNC HICH

Hit Parader: STP benefited from the commercial success enjoyed by the Seattle grunge movement. Did it bother you to be considered part of that seare?

Scott Weiland: It did bother me. The most basic thing is that we weren't from Seattle, and we were never really a part of that movement. But things go much deeper than that. I never had anything against those Seattle bands, in fact I really liked what most of them were doing. That's not what pissed me off. It was much more about the role the media played in trying to squeeze us into what was happening at that time. I think a lot of people were far more interested in lumping bands together into neat little packages than trying to listen and discover what made a band unique. Why should people try to find common threads between bands instead of placing equal effort into discovering what makes them tick? That makes no sense at all to me. I hate the "cookle cutter" mentality, and when we were placed into that, I was obvi-

ously quite annoyed.
HP: As you look back on your time with STP, was your first taste of fame and fortune as satisfying as you might have hoped?

SW: Yeah, I would have to say that it was really interesting. Actually, I remember that we were on the road almost non-stop after the first album came out, and when you're out there you live in a little world all its own— you don't even have the chance to know how well your album is doing, or if the video is being played. People will come up to you and tell you that they've seen it on TV or heard your single on the radio, but that's the only way you have any idea. But we had been

confident about what the band could accomplish, so we weren't that surprised. But when the various perks of celebrity began to come our way, that was definitely surprising.

HP: STP always seemed as if it was a band greater than the sum of its individual parts. Accurate?

W: All I can say is that we were four very different individuals who never tried to conform into fitting into any particular category or band philosophy. Our musical tastes were different, and our tastes in just about everything else were pretty different as well. That way I imagine that we had a very hard-to-classify image, and that was great. I'd much prefer to have people react to our music than to the way we walked, talked or dressed. There's been too much of that in rock and roll for too long.

HP: You occasionally expressed dismay that STP fans didn't really listen to your song lyrics... they just cheered everything you

W: I think that was more a reaction I had to some of our first singles. I was more surprised than anything else. It was great that our songs received such strong support from both fans and the media, but it was a little strange to have people banging their

heads and shouting encouragement at our shows as they listened to a song like Sex Type Thing which was about a social injustice. That really kind of tweeked me off. That one was about how men hinder the freedom of women, but many men started taking that song on face value— not bothering to really try and understand what it was about. That really was annoying.

what it was about. That really was annoying.

HP: Early on you expressed your fondness for playing clubs you certainly haven't had much chance since then, whether with STP or Velvet Revolver.

W: I always did love playing clubs, and I was happy when Velvet Revolver tried to go back to some smaller places after our first album came out. In clubs you get to interact with the crowd, really feel the energy. That's a really good experience. Playing arenas is very different. The crowd seems so distant, but it's our job to break down those barriers whether we're playing in front of 200 people or 20,000

HP: Do you ever recall having to go on and win over a potentially hostile audience.

W: With Velvet Revolver it's been incredibly positive. Even in the beginning with STP I don't think we really ever encountered a hostile audience— but they were a little indifferent at first. But that does make you work a little harder. We were never really into that whole "rock star" thing, so the idea of people cheering us just for showing up never appealed to us. We liked the attitude of having to work to get some reaction— we knew we could do that. It might have taken the crowd a few songs to get into us, but that was okay. We had 'em at

the end, and that's what matters.

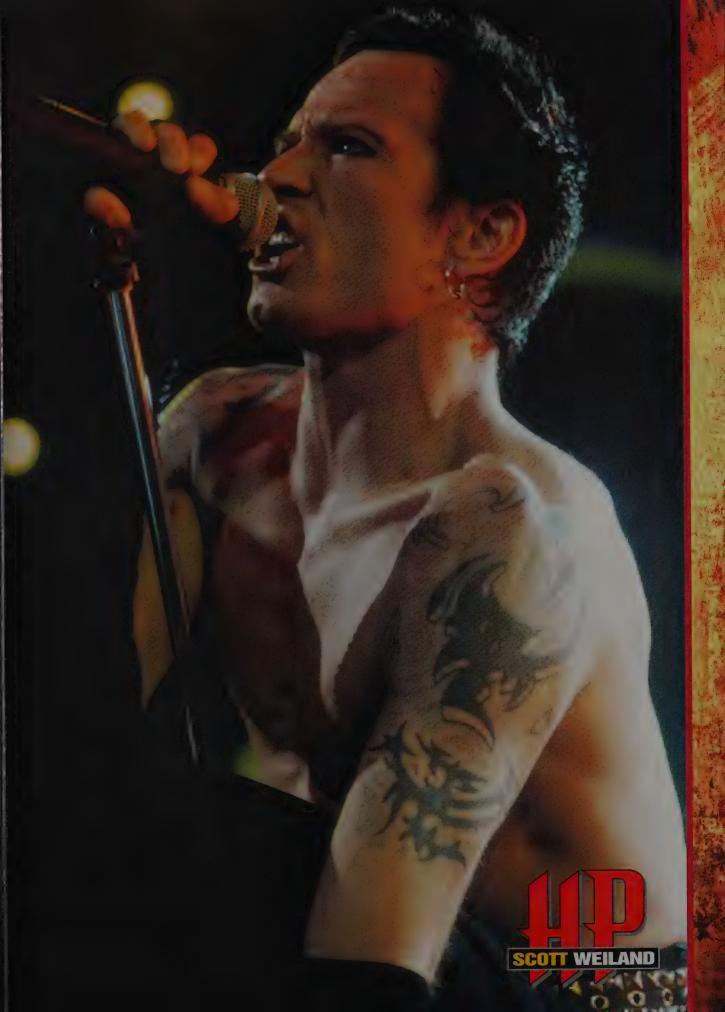
HP: Have you found fans in other parts of the world different than fans in the U.S.?

W: Europe can be a little different. At times they respond to different things than American fans do. It's a little more unpredictable. But, once again, that's a challenge that never intimidated me in the least. There's no question that touring in Europe is a little different than touring in the States, and I've always really enjoyed it.

HP; It seems that you see a lot wrong with the way rock and roll has been presented in recent years. If you could, what would shape whout it?

W: I don't know if I would say that I see a lot wrong with it. That would be a very pretentious thing for me to do. I have mentioned certain things that I find annoying, but I don't think I'm alone in that regard. I imagine many other bands find being categorized somewhat objectionable. And the response fans have given some songs is a little disturbing. But it's my job to educate them the best I can. I feel I'm up to any challenge that's placed in my way. In fact, I now welcome those challenges.





hen Korn emerged on the heavy music scene in the mid-'90s, they did so at a time when the form was at low-ebb. Following the untimely demise of grunge due to the death of Kurt Cobain, and

the moribund state of the Hair Metal movement, the hard rock style had been virtually neutered, depending on a string of pseudo-punk bands like Green Day and the Offspring to keep it alive. But just when things seemed at their bleakest, along came vocalist Jonathan Davis, guitarists James "Munky" Shaffer and Brain "Head" Welch (who left the band in 2005), bassist Fieldy and drummer David Silveria with their down-tuned, seven-string guitars and angst-filled lyrics. The heavy metal form would never be the same again.

Within months an entire "New Metal" movement had been spawned, with this

quintet from Bakersfield, CA serving as that style's unquestioned ringleaders Through the sheer strength of their musical vision and the total uniqueness of their approach, Korn instantly began to leave an indelible stamp upon the rock world. Due to the bold, brash manner in which they imbued the traditional strains of heavy metal with elements of industrial, pop and even a touch of hip-hop, they effectively laid the foundation for rock and roll's next great musical revolution.

"If anyone believes we intended to change the way people played hard rock they'd be sadly mistaken," Davis said. "All we wanted to do was do something that got us noticed. Everything else was just a nice side-benefit.'

In retrospect, perhaps we would all be better off labeling Korn's rather radical musical approach as "evolutionary" rather than "revolutionary." Indeed, the music they've created over the last dozen years has drawn upon many familiar elements from rock and roll history and simply mutated those styles beyond the point of immediate recognition. Sure, their infusion of street-wise rhythms and conventional hard rock sounds into such albums as Life is Peachy, Follow The Leader, Issues and See You on The Other Side, is startling in its rich blend of formerly conflicting musical elements. But at their heart, the pulsating rhythms and propulsive guitar riffs that supply Korn with much of their musical backbone are as old and familiar as rock and roll itself.

"Our sound is always spun from a basic guitar off." Munky said. "You can also have a bass or from groove, and we just kind of feed on of that one thing as a band, It's weird with us. When we write, Jonathan often only hums male as the the some are just born.'

As savy and as sincere as these California-based rooms may be, deep in their musical souls they'd have to admit that they're as surprised as anyone about their unexpected rise and decade-long stay at the very pinnacle of rock industry power. Industry, this was a bond viewed by many as clear-cut "outsiders" when their self-titled debut was released back in 1994— at the height of "grunge-mania". Few could have imaging that in 2007. Kom would not only be sitting atop the music world, but that they'd be the ly charm for the development of an entire cottage industry of Kom related or Kom supported musical properties. From the rise of their Family Values to us into an important shows a for both metal and alternative performers, to the precedent-shattering "par nership" deal they signed with their new record label. Korn have clearly emerged as the major force in the 21st Century rock revival.

"Those guys are just so clever" explained a label source. "When they want to get some

thing done that 'laio back' California attitude goes right out the window."

And make no mistake about it. Despite all that they've accomplished, the guys in Korn are not about to sit back and rest on their abundant accomplishments. Despite the departure of

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PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

Head (who has yet to be permanently replaced) the band continues to tour the face of Planet Earth in support of their latest release. And as the rave reviews for the 2006 Family Values tour continue to pour in, there's no question that this unit is once again at the peak of their powers. Having shared the stage on this FV outing with the likes of Stone Sour and the Deftones, Korn immediately proved the viability of their end-of-summer music fest. And by adding a touch of "alternative" music to the bill, Korn have done more than any other act to help unify the oft-divergent worlds of metal and hip-hop. While some veteran hard rock acts continue to look askance at the very notion of rap and metal performers sharing the same stage and the same audience, Korn have clearly proven both the economic and the musical viability of such an arrangement.

"Korn has done an absolutely amazing job at promoting both themselves and the entire industry," said one noted East Coast concert promoter. "The idea of the arena rock show was something of a dying breed when Korn brought the concept back with Family Values. And even more importantly, their concept of presenting hip-hip and metal performers on the same bill was truly revolutionary. You've got to back to go the '60s when Bill Graham presented some very eclectic bills at the old Fillmores to see anything that matched what Family Values presented."

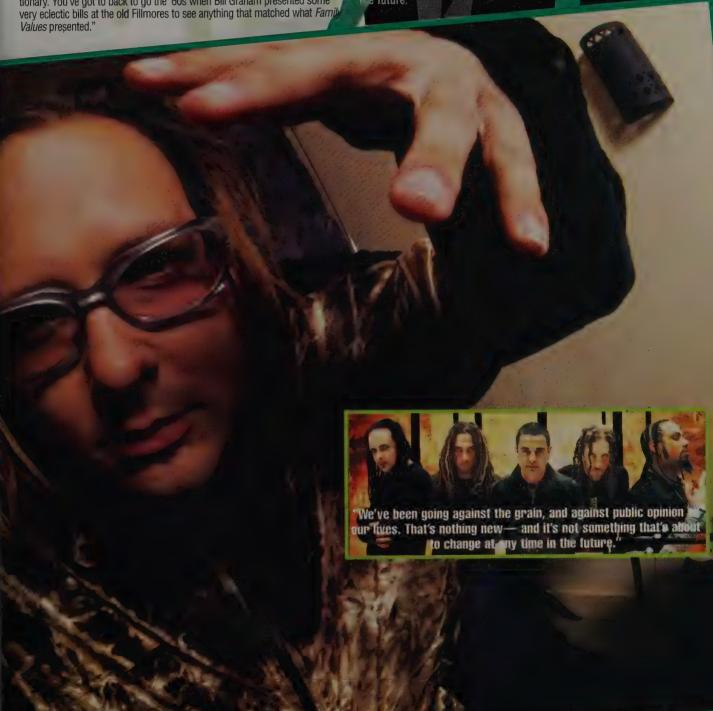
"If anyone believes we intended to change the way paople played hard rock they'd be sady mistaken."

So where does Korn go from here? How does a band that virtually revolutionized the rock world during their 13 year existence ever hope to top their initial accomplishments? For many groups being hailed as "the most important band of their general" would be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however would be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however would be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however would be a single property of the world be already attained in the music bize of the kind of impact that the world and sundry rock and roll to the world be a single property of the kind of impact that the world and sundry rock and roll to the world be a single property of the kind of impact that the world be an analysis of the kind of impact that the world be an accomplished to the property of the kind of impact that the world be an accomplished to the property of the kind of impact that the world be an accomplished to the property of the world be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however, we have a single property of the world be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however, we have a single property of the world be an incredibly intimidating hurdle to confront. For Korn, however, we have a single property of the world be a single property

kind of impact that their value and sundry rock and roll activities have had on the strict of the st

is stronguestionably a great deal of rock and roll while It to be done.

We just do what strikes us as a good ide Davis said, "We don't are if it makes sense to anyone else. Very been going against the rain, and against public opinion all our live. That's nothing new at's not something that's about to change a any time in the future."



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only one Boston-area record store. Through a stroke of good fortune, one of those bargain-basement discs ended up in the hands of the program director for local rock radio station WAAF, who began highlighting songs from the album. Listener reaction to Godsmack was immediate, and it was strong. Soon the unit's local club shows emerged as sold-out, must-see events-

lously low sum of \$2,500 (on money borrowed from a friend), and sold in

thanks to fans who had picked up on the band through their unexpected radio exposure. It just-so-happened that one of the people drawn to the group's live shows was Paul Geary, the former drummer for the Bostonbased group Extreme, who also happened to be a long-time friend of Erna's. Upon seeing the group's dynamic on-stage presentation, and realizing the depth and power of their song catalog, Geary stepped in with an offer to manage the band. Under his guidance, Godsmack's self-produced disc continued to sell an astounding number of copies.

"It was really incredible," Erna said. "Suddenly our album started selling more than a thousand copies a week, which might not sound like much now, but you've got to remember that we had done this on our own, and it was still only available at one store in the entire world.

The buzz that started to surround Godsmack and their music began to filter out of the Boston area and reach the ears of major label A&R reps.

Soon a full-scale label quest was on to get this local phenomenon to sign a recording contract. By July, 1998, the band finally agreed to have a major label handle the distribution of Godsmack. While some within the music industry believed that the dark, highly-charged structure of the band's lyrics, as well as their propulsively heavy sound, would serve to limit the group's eventual commercial impact, others believed differently. In such songs as Timebomb, Immune and Voodoo they heard a band that had it all together -- a group that could produce radio-friendly hits as

well as strong, album-oriented tracks

There are a lot of emotional highs and lows in my songs, but they're all genuine emotions," Erna said. "I seem to do my best writing when I'm down. For me writing is a release of energy.

That energy release continued on the band's next CD, Awake, one of the most exciting discs of 2001. Not only did that

album add another incredible page to Godsmack's fast-growing dossier of rock and roll achievements, it seemed to solidify the band as a unit that was going to stick around for the long-haul. In a world dominated by heretoday, gone-later-today groups, this quartet showed that they were triedand-true "lifers." Indeed the success of Awake and its follow-up, Faceless, added to the prestige of their debut disc, and served to make Godsmack one of the most recognized and successful hard rock groups of their era. In the eyes of many, Godsmack helped spark a new generation of metal bands that needed to stand up and be counted—to make their presence felt in the always-unpredictable rock world. All of their previous notoriety, however, has only served as an appetizer for the degree of excitement generated by the arrival of IV. From first cut to last, this disc stands as the band's supreme accomplishment, the most profound, polished and powerful collection of their career.

"The best part of this album's success is that the fans seem to like it," Erna said. "Our fans have always meant so much to us. I don't care if it's been when we played in clubs years ago, or when we've played in arenas in recent days, their loyalty and support has been incredible. To stand on stage and see them respond to what we're doing, is one of the greatest feelings in the world. It is such an incredible motivating factor for us. It makes us very proud of what we've accomplished because we know it's bringing pleasure to those fans as well as to us."

ight after night, Sully Erna stands defiantly on stage, shoulder-to-shoulder with bandmates Tony Rombola, Robbie Merrill and Shannon Larkin. With minimal muss, fuss or bother, this unit, collectively known as Godsmack, lay the smack down on their appreciative fan-base, cranking out some of the most propulsive, emotive and overwhelming bard rock music of the last decade. And the reacon their sound has generated in every corner of

the rock universe has served to make this still relatively unassuming quartet one of the true success stories of recent memory. As wave upon wave of audience adulation washes over them at every stop along their seemingly never-ending tour trail, this Bostonbased unit revel in the fact that they have now clearly beaten the odds. They

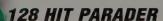
have entered the ever-unpredictable rock and roll sweepstakes, played the

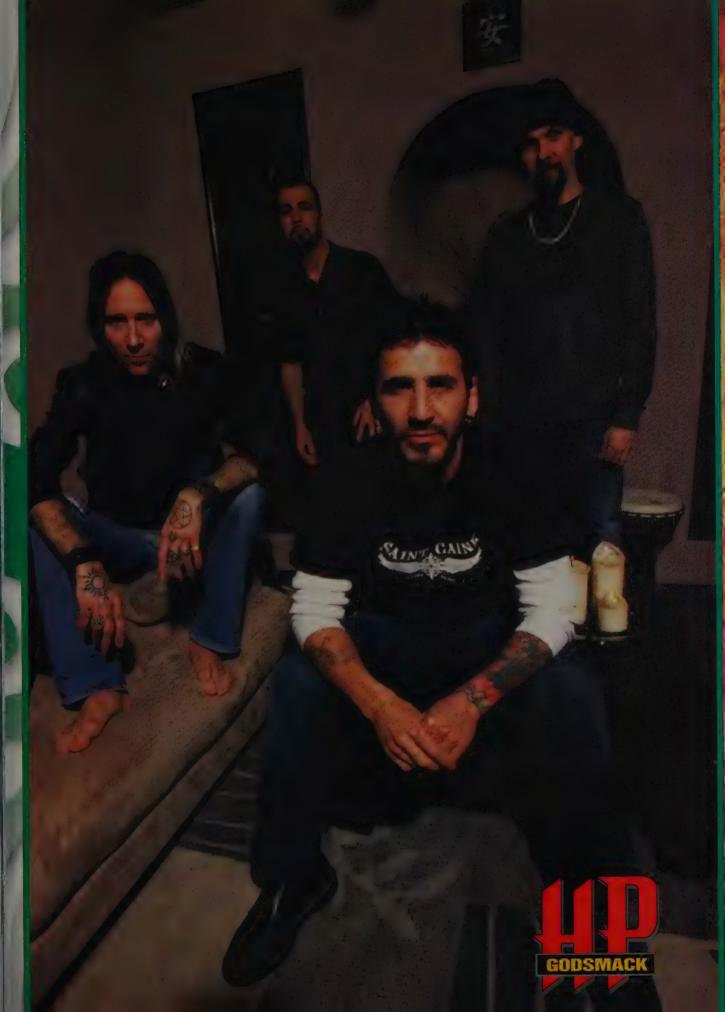
game by their own rules, and emerged as big winners.

To anyone who has spent even a few fleeting moments studying the contemporary music landscape, it is clear that Godsmack is on a roll. This now internationally-acclaimed hard rock band has recently seen their four discs, Godsmack, Awake, Faceless and IV reach a cumulative sales total exceeding nine million copies thanks to the power, passion and precision contained in such chart-topping hits as Keep Away, Whatever and Straight Out of Line. For Godsmack, their success is more than a statement of purpose, or even a dream come true; in every way, shape and form, it's the fulfillment of their wildest rock and roll fantasy.

"To have our fourth album sell so well is still a pleasant surprise," Ema said. "It's something you never get used to and certainly *never* take for granted. I don't think the four of us can still fathorn the thought of that many people going out and buying our albums. It's the ultimate compliment to know that they've gone out of their way, and paid their hardearned money, to share the music with us.

The chart-topping status of IV culminates what has been an incredible decade-long rocket ride to the top for this heavy-handed quartet. To say the least, success has not come easily or particularly quickly for this hard-rocking, highly emotive unit. In fact, it was all the way back in 1996 that the first version of Godsmack's debut CD was recorded for the ridicu-





evendust are tried of hearing all the talk. Once again, they're' ready to Walk the walk. For nearly a decade this Atlanta-based hard rock the world... how each of their albums should sell at least a million copies... now they should be neadlining arena tours from Boston to Bangkok. Yes, vocalist Lajon Witherspoon, guitarist John Connelly, Mayo (who replaced founding member Clint Lower) in 2004) have head it all before. They also know that at times in the past they've come this/close. Home moved over 500,000 copies and threatened to shoot this multi-reason, the chemical reaction needed to turn gold into platnum never occurred, leaving these talented rockers disappointed. disillusioned and the internal distarmony that was raging within Sevendust apparently came seemed to radiscover not only their love for the music they were creating but their love for one another, as well. As almost a reflection of this life-record label, and started their own firm, 7Bros. through which they once again hearing whispers about how they might soon be among the collected turn their hears, however, these now-more mature and focused rockers are allowing those words to spur on their musical actions to a new level of intensity.

Hit Parader. Is it hard for you to believe that Next comes out a decade after Sevendust first began recording?

Lajon Witherspoon: It does make us feel old, but it's also a great feeling to know that we've beaten the odds and managed to survive while a lot of the bands we came up with have not. We're at a very good point in our career. We have a very solid following. Our albums go gold. And we have a lot of success when we're on tour. When you combine all those things together, I guess we have a lot to be thankful about. HP: You proudly mention that your albums have gone gold, but is it frustrating that you've yet to experience that BIG commercial breakthrough?

LW: Yes and no. On one hand we're all very satisfied to have enough success to pay our bills and keep the band going. On the other, it would be nice to have that kind of smash hit album where it would just carry us to an entire other level. I think we can handle that kind of success now—though I'm not so sure how we would have handled it in the past.

HP: How surprised were you when Clint Lowery left the band?

LW: Hmmmm.... surprised? I don't know if that's the word I'd want to use. It's a strange subject for me to discuss because I don't want to say anything that I might later regret. Let's just say that we all knew that Clint has always wanted to work with his brother, and now he's got that chance.

HP: And how did the band hook up with Sonny Mayo?

LW: We've known Sonny for years, all the way back to his Snot days. When the opening in the band came up, he was the first name that we all thought of. It was very natural and very exciting-both for Sonny and for the rest of us. As soon as we spoke to him he came down to where we were writing the album in Florida and he

dove right in. His energy was infectious. It made us appreciate this band and the music we're capable of making all over again. He forced us to change... and it was a change for the better. Getting a new member in the band is kind of like getting a new girlfriend. It makes you appreciate a lot of things that you may have forgotten or begun to have taken for granted.

HP: How would you say that Sevendust has changed on Next?

LW: We haven't really written songs together in a long time. Over the last few albums, we tended to do a lot of the writing on our own, then bring the work together when the band got ready to record. But when Sonny joined the band it almost forced us to work together more closely. After all, we had a new member for the first time in a decade, and we wanted to make sure that his transition was as easy for both him and us as possible. But having him aboard, and then having the chance to tour with him for about 30 shows late last year, really got us into a groove. It got us all on the same page for the first time in a while and that made a big impact on the music for this album.

"It would be nice to have that smash hit album that would carry us to another level."

HP: What is the significance of Next for you?

LW: You know, we've been around for a while now. We know the way things are supposed to be, and how they aren't supposed to be. I don't mean to make that sound arrogant, but it's true. This is our fifth album-we've done a lot in our career. I'm 32 years old now, and we've all gone through our personal storms and come back to realize just how much this all means to us. This is truly the next big step for us—the first album with a new member and for our own record label. How exciting can things get?

HP: Tell us how you ended up having your own label.

LW: It's a new thing to a lot of the fans, but it's something that we've been working on for quite a while. We had been with our previous label forever-since we were all kids. It's all we ever knew. So when the opportunity came to get out there and see what else was being offered us, it was a real eye-opener. A lot of people showed interest—even if some of the major labels kind of took their time. But when Universal structured it so that we could have our own label we couldn't imagine a better opportunity than that. It was truly a dream-come true.

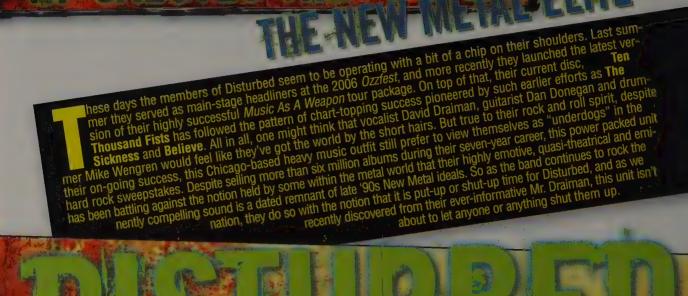
HP: What's so special about having your own label?

LW: I've always wanted the chance to help other artists fulfill their destiny. I want to be in the position that provides other bands with the kind of chance that we never got when we were coming along. That means so much to me. It's a great feeling to walk into a club and instead of just listening to great music by a band you may have never heard before, you now know that if you find someone like that, you're in a position to reach out and do something about it.

HP: Is there one track on Next that's a personal favorite?

LW: The track that ties together everything that's happening to us at the moment is ironically titled Failure. It's one I wrote with Morgan and it's all about how his parents always thought he was going to be a failure. But right now everything is perfectly aligned for us. All my life I've been waiting for the opportunities that are now coming our way with a new label, a new album and a band that's totally focused on making the best music we can. I have a family that loves me, as well as the chance to be home enough so that my daughter gets to know who I am. I feel very blessed. That's what that song— and much of the album— is about.





"am one of the least compacent people voice fire."

Hit Parader: What continues to motivate you after three successful albums and countless sold-out tours?

David Draiman: It might be easier to find what doesn't motivate me.

Everything, from the way this industry sometimes treats us, to what I hear on the news every day motivates me. This is not a form that can stand complacency... and I am one of the least complacent people you're likely to meet

HP: As you've grown within the rock world over the last seven years, what lessons have you learned?

DD: This album has been something of a revelation for me, and I hope it has had the same kind of impact upon our fans. The title **Ten Thousand Fists** is a salute to those fans who come out and support us every night. They presented a challenge to us to make this album better than what we've done before, and we feel we've been up to that challenge. With each thing you accomplish, the next challenge pops up. Your first album is a success, you want your second one to be bigger. Then your second album is a hit, and you want your next one to be even better. It's an endless process. That's the way it should be. We want challenges. Our logic has always been that rock and roll is a full-contact sport. This is not something you sit on the sidelines and watch. You have to be involved in it. All that matters to us is that at the end of the day you get to have a sea of people moving as one to the beat of your songs.

HP: Are finding those new challenges this band's primary goal?

DD: We have set some goals for ourselves in everything that we do. We want to make sure that we keep delivering our music in the same uncompromising, unrelenting manner that the fans have already grown to expect. That's the way we've approached our albums and our live shows. We've surrounded ourselves with people that try to do things from that same perspective. We know we're creating a certain level of expectation from our fans, and that's what we want. If we ever fail to deliver exactly what they want and exactly what they expect, then we should hear back from them—and I'm sure if we ever do, it'll be a very loud, clear message.

HP: Has the response to Ten Thousand Fists surprised you in any way?

HP: Has the response to **Ten Thousand Fists** surprised you in any way? **DD:** You never know for sure how people will respond to what you create. It's one of the most fascinating aspects of being an artist. You spend months of your life creating something you believe is special, then you wait to see how

people react to it. We pour so much of ourselves into the making of an album. It's always a very labor-intensive, and at times a tedious procedure to make sure that these songs come out just the way we want them to.

HP: Disturbed has become a leader of the current heavy music movement a fact enforced by your role in your on-going Music As A Weapon tours. Is there something that unifies this musical movement?

DD: There are some things that a lot of those bands share. Nobody is out there trying to sell candy to you. Nothing is sugar coated, and it's probably a little bit tastier that way. We listen to a lot of music, and we've been able to tour with a lot of the bands making that music. They've all really impressed us. And they're all really good people. That's important. They all put on a great show, and lay it on the line in order to entertain everyone.

HP: So there is a real "movement" feel that all these bands share.

DD: They all have something genuine to offer people, and there's certainly a commonality in terms of the sonic situation. We all are essentially metal bands. It's not that we're against any other type of music, but I think that all these bands share a desire to create uncompromising, in-your-face music that's really unrelenting.

HP: What's been the best part of Disturbed's success for you?

DD: Probably it's been being able to interact with the kids. It's the people from all walks of like, who all seem to congregate and get their release together when they come to one of our shows. It's everybody who gets physically involved. I mean, this isn't something you do half-heartedly. You have to be totally involved in it— whether you're on stage or in the audience.

HP: How powerful do you feel when you're on stage with thousands of kids

singing along with you?

DD: (Laughing) It's truly an unbelievable feeling. It's the best feeling in the world, and I mean the best! There's nothing in my realm of experience— and believe me, I've experienced a lot— that can compare to that feeling of being on stage in front of a really hot, responsive crowd. It's better than anything you could possibly imagine, and the best part is that it doesn't damage you. The lifestyle may damage you, but playing in front of the fans definitely doesn't. It's incredible.



hey've sold over a million copies of their latest disc. **Chapter V**, a number matched by its predecessor, **14 Shades of Grey**. They've moved over eight million copies of their previous three releases, **Tormented**, **Dysfunction** and **Break The Cycle**. They've packed arenas around the world. Their videos for songs like *Price to Play*, *Outside*, *Suffocate* and *Fade* have become MTV staples. Indeed, it's been quite a career for Staind. But despite all of the incredible success that has come their way since they first got their hard rockin' "ball" rolling a decade ago, vocalist Aaron Lewis, guitarist Mike Mushok, drummer Johnny April and bassist Jon Wysocki seem to have somehow maintained a firm grip on that ever-elusive quality known as "reality." Now, as they continue the process of touring the world in support their latest album, it seems as if the members of this Massachusetts-based unit are feeling a bit more pressure than ever before. But as this conversation with Lewis indicates, these days nothing seems to be bothering the platinum-covered rockers in Staind.

Hill Perader. As we speak it is see 2006, and Stanid it completing one of the most successful recording therming cycles of your current How its your cert?

Aaron Lewis: I feel tired, It's been a long period for us from the time we began writing this album to now... about 18 months. We work hard when we're on the road. We've learned how to pace ourselves, but once we get going, we don't like to lose momentum. We don't want to take iono peri

AL: It's a very different time in our career, and a different set of circurnstances. Chapter V was our first album

with some new people and doing things in a somewhat different way, In addition, this time, we kind of came in occasionally had in the past. But the album has done very well—it's just that the sales patterns have been a little different.

AL: I think we've dealt with it to the best of our abilities. I don't know if you really ever become comfortable with something like that. It's something that

exceeded all of our expectations. But we were fortunate in that there has been a relatively slow build associated with our career, so success certainly wasn't something that happened overnight. We had already tasted some success with our previous albums, so we had hoped that this album would take the next step for us. In an artistic sense, I think

HP: Wittin voor began avorlang en Chastier V. was a

AL: It's exciting more than intimidating; just making this album was exciting after the success we've

enjoyed with the previous albums we've made. It's a challenge, but it's the kind of challenge that we seem to respond to quite well. There are times when you're recording, or when I'm by myself working on lyrics, that are somewhat painful, but that's good. You've got to open up to those feelings in order to make the kind of music we want. But success has never been our motivation— making great music has. That's still the way it is.

HP: You've often indicated the "responsibility" you feel in having fans relate

AL: It's never easy to think about having that kind of power the ability to when you're in a band. It's incredible to know that the fans are able to get into the lyrics as much as they do, And I feel it is my responsibility to offer them at least a little bit of hope, some kind of light at the end of a dark tunner. There are fans who've taken our songs very much to hear

me— I can't handle it But when I hear that hope, and that they can

AL: I would like to think so, I freely very dark places throughout my life. But thanks to my wife, and aty family, I'm probably more content

that's been reflected in the music to some extent, though I'm sure there

will always be a dark side to Staind's music.

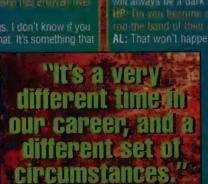
HP: Do you become concerned that your more contributed the will point rob the band of their innais "dark" quality?

AL: That won't happen. I have more than 30 years of pain to draw upon.

tap into that pool of emotion at any time. It's great

those kinds of songs have generated. To a lot of geople we've always been a heavy band, but there has always been more to Staind than that. The duality of our music has always been our

strength. Actually, it's very logical for us to play more acoustic begin with just an acoustic guitar, and then take it from there. When I feel it's reached a certain point. I'll take it to the band, and then we'll all get together to complete it. The music is always the first thing that gets done, then the lyrics pick up from there. My background has always been in listening to singer/songwriters. The heavier side of things comes





a lot of lesson some of which we have never to lave to face."

n the surface, rock and roll might look like the ultimate high-stakes "game"— a place where fortunes are made, fashions are created, and jet-set lifestyles are always considered "in". For some lucky bands that's exactly the way it is- everything they say and do within the rock and roll sphere ends up having a significant impact upon virtually every aspect of contemporary society. Your words fill the papers, you date beautiful models and you hang out with other rock stars in exotic locales. Indeed, you become the very symbol of success.

That was certainly the way it appeared to be for Bush during the mid-'90s when such discs as 16 Stone and Razorblade Suitcase helped place these London natives among the leading lights of the post-grunge hard rock world. Vocalist/ guitarist Gavin Rossdale found himself on the cover of countless magazines due to both his rakish good looks and the fact that he was dating No Doubt's rock goddess. Gwen Stefani-who subsequently became his wife,.. and the mother of his child. The band's tours packed arenas throughout the world, and it clearly did appear that Bush were the living,

breathing poster boys for the rock and roll "good life."

But then, as with seemingly all good things, the glitz and glamour of the rock kingdom began to fade for Bush. They began to run into problems with their record label, and as the band's later discs were released to increasingly mixed reviews, it seemed much of the bloom had begun to fall off of the Bush rose. Reality wasn't far removed from that perception. While they would hang around for another few years before finally breaking asunder, the Golden Age of Bush had, in fact, come and gone in seemingly the blink of a rock and roll eve.

However, the rise and fall of Bush is more than a mere contemporary music tale. Indeed, the band formed by Rossdale, drummer Robin Goodridge, bassist Dave Parsons, and guitarist Nigel Pulsford made their mark on the hard rock world-perhaps most notably as the logical link between the angst-filled sounds of Seattle "grunge" and the advent of the New Metal explosion. For a five-year period they reigned as one of the most successful bands in the world, and throughout the mid-'90s this multi-talented unit touched the very core of the rock scene through the power, passion and precision contained within their uniquely-crafted slices of musical "art'

"It was an interesting time," Rossdale said with an impish smile. "We learned a lot of lessons— some of which we hoped never to have to face. There are harsh realities in the music indus-try, but we have nothing to complain about. We had our time made our music and certainly enjoyed our success."

spotlight. Never embraced by the rock intelligentsia— even when they were at the peak of their powers as Media Darlings— the band still managed to cut quite a swath through the rock and roll scene. And, somewhat ironically, even the most cursory conversation with Rossdale reveals the interesting tidbit that he believes that Bush only began to scratch the surface of their emotive, pow erful sound. Indeed, despite his current work with the band Institute— whose debut disc, **Distort Yourself** made nary a mark early in 2006— one gets the sensation that a Bush reunion of some sort is not out of the question at some point in his future. Call it arrogance, confidence, or just good-natured positive thinking, but Rossdale remains convinced that Bush created a very spe cial brand of rock and roll, even if they weren't always given proper credit for doing so.

"You never really know how anyone is going to react to the music you make," he explained. "You sit around a recording studie and all you can hope to do is please yourself or other members of your band. The thought that millions of people once bought your albums, and that millions more heard your music on the radio, never crosses your mind. It can't, otherwise you'd just be too over whelmed to even attempt to play anything new.

It was always fascinating to see how the rock world responded to Bush's musical efforts. After all, despite all of their multi-platinum success, there were always those who remained decidedly less-than-thrilled by what they viewed as the band's overt attempts to blend progressive rock angst with a distinctly bland pop sensithere were many who believed that Bush was a band that too often featured style over substance, thus minimizing their impact on the contemporary music scene. Others, however, insist that through the grace and beauty contained within their songs, Rossdale and the boys played a singularly distinctive role in helping to reestab lish a hard rock ethic for a then-needy music world.

"Sometimes it seemed as if some people would do anything to avoid giving us any credit," Rossdale said. "But I think that's something virtually every band goes through. I remember once reading some of the early reviews that bands like Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones received. Even those groups were often dismissed as being little more than 'second rate blues bands.' Can

ing a bit of fault with what we did than with just loving everything.

Despite the six-year gap that now separates Bush from their last significant contact with the rock scene, it appears as if the band's fan base remains very much intact. Indeed, thanks to their on-going role as radio staples, it seems as if a surprising number of people continue to be in love with Bush's enigmatic, energetic sound. Yet Rossdale knows that there were always critics out there waiting to savage him, and he remains extremely aware that in the ever-fickle rock world yesterday's accomplishments count for little But that does little to detract from his heart-felt satisfaction surrounding everything "zen" that Bush accomplished during their five-year run to greatness:

years was due to the unusual subject matter of the songs. I liked that. At heart, we wanted to always keep what it was that made us





t seems that once every decade—give or take a few years— a performer or group comes along that through a combination of luck, fortitude and design manages to totally change the rock and roll landscape. Back in the '50s that guy was the hip-shakin' Elvis Presley. In the '60s it was the guitar maestro, Jimi Hendrix. In the '70s Led Zeppelin first put the pedal to the metal. And in the '80s the decade's most influential band was Metallica. Each of these artists had a significant and lasting impact on the style, sound and attitude of their generation— an influence that usurped the impact of any other performer of their time.

Whether he liked it or not— and odds are he was never particularly thrilled about it— in the post-Cobain mid-'90s Trent Reznor was clear-

ly his generation's most potent musical genius. In addition to virtually single-handedly creating such platinum-selling masterworks as **The Downward Spiral**, NIN's main man emerged as the driving force behind an entire branch of

the alternative rock family tree. The brilliant but occasionally unpredictable Reznor forged a musical persona so strong and so pervasive that his influence, whether direct or inferred, touched the artistic souls of just about every new performer then inhabiting the rock jungle. From musical descendents such as Marilyn Manson—who enjoyed his greatest success under Reznor's hands-on production efforts—to a generation of bands that grew up under his all-encompassing musical perspectives, this charismatic, blackhaired visionary blossomed into his era's most influential and inspiring rock and roll guiding light.

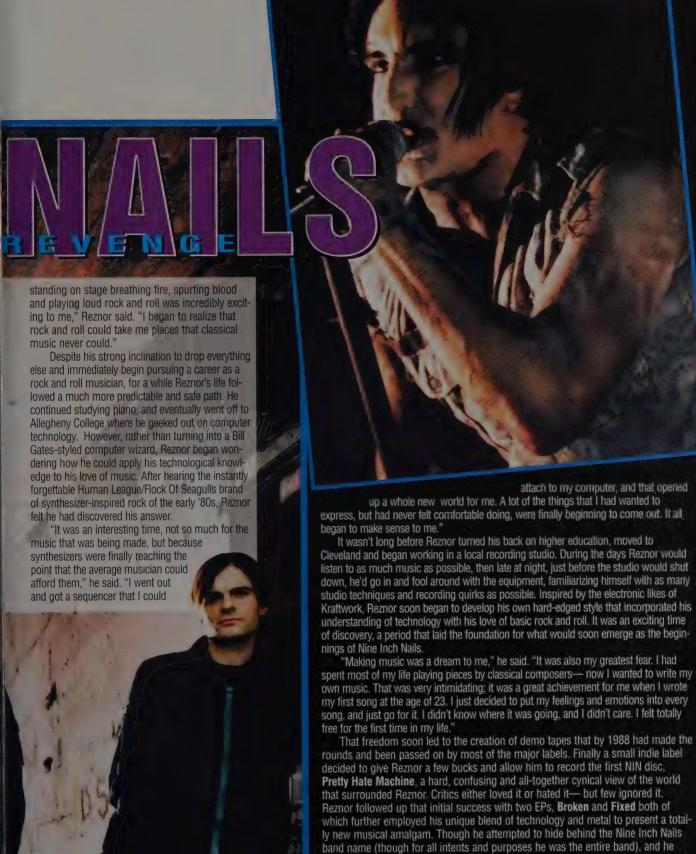
"My songs are so personal, they come from deep inside me," Reznor stated at the time. "I

started writing down my thoughts— usually very dark, depressing thoughts— and those eventually became the lyrics to my songs. I am surprised that what's going on in my head has been accepted by so many. I always believed my work was too dark, and far too personal, to be accepted the way it has."

Growing up in the rural Pennsylvania 'burb of Mercer. Reznor always sensed that he never fit in with the small town values that his parents embraced so passionately. While studying piano at the tender age of five, young Trent began to become aware that he possessed a special giftone that his sports-loving school mates failed to understand. He was encouraged to focus virtually all of his attentions on his music, foregoing a variety of social activities that he now admits may have made him "a little more normal." But after practicing for eight hours a day, six days a week, for the better part of the next decade, something magical happened—Reznor discovered rock and roll, Kiss in particular, and his life was changed forever.

"When your world has basically consisted of being trained to be a classical pianist by a nun, the idea of

"I always believed my work was too dark, and too personal to be accepted the way it has."



attach to my computer, and that opened

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

Cleveland and began working in a local recording studio. During the days Reznor would listen to as much music as possible, then late at night, just before the studio would shut down, he'd go in and fool around with the equipment, familiarizing himself with as many studio techniques and recording quirks as possible. Inspired by the electronic likes of Kraftwork, Reznor soon began to develop his own hard-edged style that incorporated his

Making music was a dream to me," he said. "It was also my greatest fear. I had spent most of my life playing pieces by classical composers-now I wanted to write my own music. That was very intimidating, it was a great achievement for me when I wrote my first song at the age of 23. I just decided to put my feelings and emotions into every song, and just go for it. I didn't know where it was going, and I didn't care. I felt totally

rounds and been passed on by most of the major labels. Finally a small indie label decided to give Reznor a few bucks and allow him to record the first NIN disc, Pretty Hate Machine, a hard, confusing and all-together cynical view of the world that surrounded Reznor. Critics either loved it or hated it- but few ignored it. Reznor followed up that initial success with two EPs, Broken and Fixed both of which further employed his unique blend of technology and metal to present a totally new musical amalgam. Though he attempted to hide behind the Nine Inch Nails band name (though for all intents and purposes he was the entire band), and he failed to even show his face on album covers, Reznor's sound soon became one of the most recognizable in the rock sphere. And when The Downward Spiral soared past double platinum in 1995 there was no doubt left in anyone's mind that this guy was more than a successful rock musician, he was a true musical visionary. At that moment Trent Reznor truly had become the voice of his generation, a dark, brooding, eminently disturbing voice fit to speak the troubles of his times.

SWESTIFICATIONS SYSTEM OF SYSTEM OF A DOWN POLITI-METAL MASTERS ere's a notion that everyone interested in heavy music should consider. System of a Down are one of the very few hard rock bands that have

ere's a notion that everyone interested in heavy music should consider. System of a Down are one of the very few hard rock bands that have never known failure. During their decade-long career they may have experienced the rare setback and encountered the occasional nay-sayer, but for the most part it's been an amazingly smooth and successful run to the top of the rock pile for this Armenian/American quartet. Ever since their self-titled debut disc emerged back in 1996, this Los Angeles-based experi-metal unit has scored hit after hit, selling more than 12 million albums in the process. With the overwhelming success of their latest album pairing, **Mezmerize** and **Hypnotize**, Serj Tankian (vocals), Daron Malakian (guitar), Shavo Odadjian (bass), and John Dolmayan (drums) have once again proven that they stand head-and-shoulders above all who may lay claim to their title as the most eclectic, esoteric hard rock band in the world. But for a unit that apparently holds all the "answers", System is a group still surrounded by "questions." Are they sometimes too smart for their own good? Has success dulled this band's razor-sharp political edge? Has their music found new creative pastures as System has continued to grow? We found the answer to all these questions, and more, during our recent conversation with Malakian.

The put myself through everything imaginable in order to best convey the thoughts and concepts that I want."

Hit Parader: Does it ever strike you as strange that the more non-commercial you try to be, the more albums you sell?

Daron Malakian: I don't know if I look at what we do in that context. I think we've earned everything that's come to us. I have no problem saying that my soul has bled for these songs—that I've put myself through everything imaginable in order to best convey the thoughts and concepts that I want. So whatever success we've had has been earned.

HP: Did you ever worry that the radical approach the band takes both muscally and lyrically could limit your success?

DM: There may have been times back when we were performing in clubs

DM: There may have been times back when we were performing in clubs when such a thought may have briefly crossed my mind. But it wasn't something that we ever really considered, let alone worried about. We never set out to sell millions of records. We never were the kind of band that listened to the radio and tried to copy what was popular. Even when we were opening shows we never tried to learn any "tricks" from the headliner. We were always most concerned with just being the best band we could be. It seems like it's worked fairly well for us.

HP: After a decade of writing, recording and touring, do you find it hard to maintain the creative edge that has always made System so special?

DM: The tough part for me is limiting what I want to say. That's why we released two albums this time—there is so much that motivates me. It can be something funny I see on the street, or it can be something tragic that's happening in the world. I never know exactly what will motivate me.

HP: How closely do you follow world events on a day-to-day basis?

DM: Sometimes when you're on the road, that can be difficult— especially if you're overseas. But with internet communication, and the ability of having cable news at your fingertip virtually wherever you are, it's now pretty easy to stay in touch. In fact, it's grown hard to avoid being confronted by the news almost all the time. I can remember a time in the late '90s that when you went on the road you were somewhat sequestered away. People had to call you up when you got to a show or arrived at a hotel in order to find you and tell you certain things. Now they can e-mail you, or call you on your cell

phone... you're never out of touch.

HP: System is such a critical favorite... are you ever amused by some of the interpretations the media has made over your music and lyrics?

DM: Not really. I try to leave the lyrics somewhat open to interpretation. If every song was strictly about my life, my experiences and by beliefs, I think things would run the risk of getting very boring. One of our strengths as a band is that even when we're writing about a very specific subject, like Armenian genocide, people can relate it to other conflicts and world situations if they want.

HP: People have always focused on the "serious" side of System. Yet you've also always shown a surprising sense of humor.

DM: People hear what they want to hear in our music, and that's fine with me. That's the way it should be. But we've always had a lot of humor in our songs. For whatever reason, people have usually tended to gravitate more towards our political material. But if the humor of our songs is being noticed, then I'm very happy. That's such a big element of what we do that I sometimes get very frustrated when it's ignored. A lot of fans expect a certain sound and a certain lyrical perspective from us, and when they're asked to listen and respond to something else it sometimes isn't that easy for them. Thankfully, they've shown a willingness to do that with these albums.

HP: What motivates your song writing?

DM: Everything motivates it. Over the last few years the world has changed around us, so we've changed as people. And if we have changed then the music we're making has changed as well. We didn't want to lose our identity, but we didn't want our newer songs to sound like anything we'd ever done before. If you try to change too much, you can lose everything you've created. It's so important that we stick to our roots because we're very proud of them. But on the other hand, I don't want to get stuck on those roots. I want to always keep adding things and changing things to what we do. I want our past success to serve as a foundation for what we're doing now.

HP: Do you ever feel any extra pressure due to the incredible success the band has enjoyed?

DM: I do feel the pressure. It's not really brought on by any success we've had, it's brought on more by my desire to make sure this band continually produces the best possible music. What that pressure does is make sure that I work as hard as I possible can. Success is something I try not to think about too much. It doesn't impact me at all. This is not a band of "rock stars" and we never will be.



n a world too often dominated by copy-cat clones and flavor-of-the-week imposters, the Red Hot Chili Peppers stand alone. For more than two decades, this legendary California-based rock contingent has continually redefined the contemporary music dictionary, while richly adding to the rock and roll lexicon. During their time in the spotlight, vocalist Anthony Kiedis, bassist Flea, drummer Chad Smith and guitarist John Frusciante have continually shown themselves to be of the most cutting-edge, most controversial and most commercially confounding bands in the long and often confusing history of rock and roll, a fact once again supported by their latest disc,

Stadium Arcadium.

During their lengthy stint at the pinnacle of acclaim, they've also proven themselves to be one of the form's most resilient forces, having continually overcome talk of "burn out" and "break up' while surviving serious drug problems and the tragic death of a band member. Thanks to the chart topping success of such discs as Blood Sugar Sex Magik, Californication, and By the Way they've reached the heights of chart acclaim, while at other times, due to their oftdocumented battles with personal demons, they've plummeted near the depths of disaster. Quite simply, the Red Hot Chili Peppers have done

Over the last 20-plus vears, this ever-clever quartet has somehow managed the seemingly impossible task of turning their often unpredictable attitudes, hell-bent approaches and peculiar punk/funk/pop predilections into something of a cottage industry. Despite taking lengthy absences from the inner-workings of the rock and roll machine -- often for the better part of half-adecade this unique unit has still exhibited a special ability to maintain a tight grip on both their ever-loval fan base and their ever-steady commercial fortunes. Their previous albums remain among the last decade's most successful rock outings, while songs like Under The Bridge have entered the pantheon of uniquely great tunes, that rarified strata where only songs that rank as soundtracks for their generation exist

All of this has to make you wonder. How has this tattooed, outspoken, unpredictable, defiant lot managed to overcome so many perceived "handicaps' to remain one of the true success stories of recent rock history? Perhaps some of the band's secrets for on-going success have been revealed on Stadium Arcadium. Or perhaps Kiedis himself will be kind enough to let us in on the "tricks" these storied El Lay bad boys have utilized to secure their seemingly permanent place atop the rock mountain— a position they've attained only after many, many years of toil and trouble.

I believe that one of the things that has allowed us to succeed against the odds is that we were never aware of any odds against us," the singer said "From the very earliest days, the point behind this band was just to make music that always evolved and changed. The idea of selling a lot of records was probably in there someplace, but it was never our motivation. The point of being in a band was to have an outlet through which we could express our feelings

Certainly some of the trials and tribulations that the Chili Peppers have suffered through along their road to the top are well known to their legion of supporters. They know how Kiedis has had to continually battle against the ravages of drug addiction— a "disease" he seems finally to have conquered. And they

know how the death of original guitarist Hillel Slovak set a dire tone for the band that lingered for years. Now as the Peppers hit the tour trail in support of **Stadium Arcadium**, which features the hit single *Dani California*, we encounter a lean, mean, *clean* version of the Chili Peppers— a band that appears more dedicated than ever to creating some of the most intriguing and challenging music ever heard by the ears of mortal man.

"We're entertainers as well as musicians," Kiedis said. "You see that on stage and in our videos.

With their videos both old and new serving as MTV staples, and the mainstream press more preoccupied than ever by the band's inner-workings, the Chili Peppers strangely still find themselves uncomfortable with their status in the

rock world. Over the last decade in particular, as hard rock has opened itself up to the hybrid of rap, metal and punk ingredients that the Peppers first helped introduce, the band's legend has

continued to grow. Fans still reminisce about the time the group members appeared on stage wearing nothing but socks over their private parts. They recall their attention-grabbing per-formance at 1994's Woodstock Festival (where they each emerged on stage dressed as a giant light bulb.) And they recount the

times that the group put on the most sweat-drenched, high-energy show that they had ever seen. It's a tough legacy to live up to (especially when you're clean and sober), but these more mature, yet still fun-loving rockers seem well prepared to handle the task at hand. Kiedis knows that his

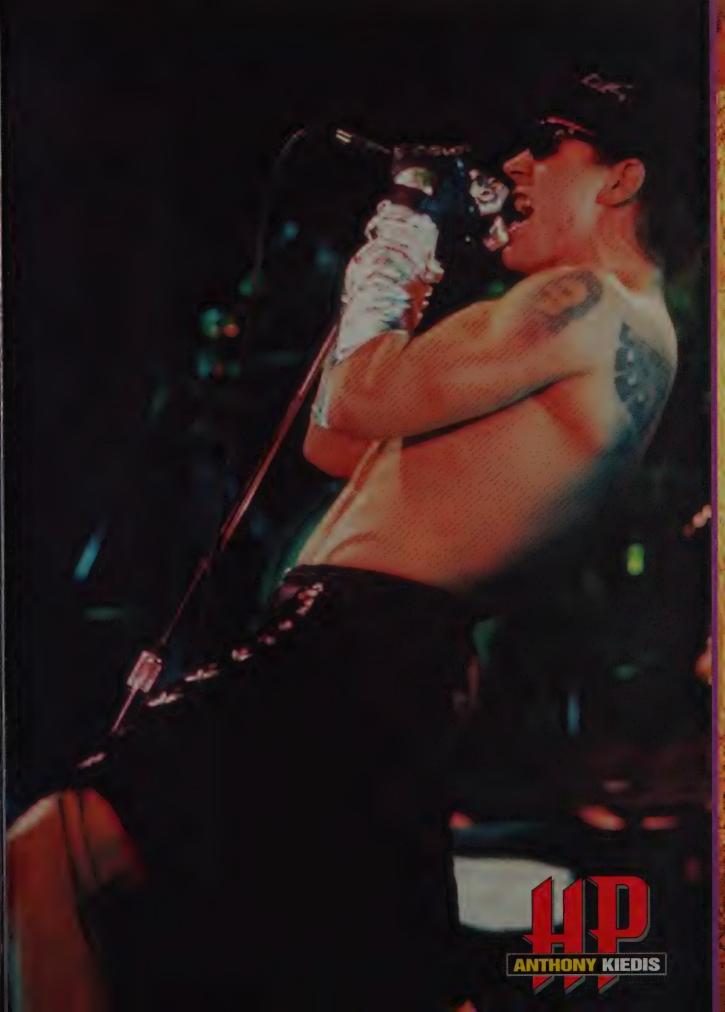
band must remain ever-wary of their status as media darlings, a fate that could be worse than death to these super-cool rock

demons. After all, how cool can a band really be if your mom and dad know who they are?

"I know that success has its good points and its bad points," he said, "There are a lot of housewives out there who still love Under The

ridge. But they don't known the some people who come to our some people who come the come people who come to our some people who come to our s

dear friend and a great quitarist, being a rock star just isn't that big a deal. Kiedis said. "Yeah, it's nice when people listen to what you say. That's why you make music in the first place; to try and communicate thoughts and emotions with other people. But having your picture on some little girl's wall isn't why I'm doing this.



olitically savvy, righteously indignant, musically bombastic, socially relevant, lib-erally leftist, artistically brilliant ... Rage Against the Machine was all that, and more! Throughout the '90s on such albums as Evil

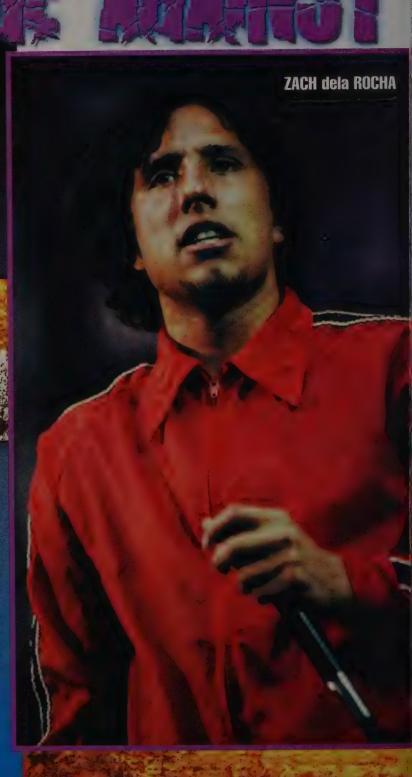
Empire, The Battle of Los Angeles and Renegades, this band combined their high-minded principles with nimblefingered metallic ideals-and even a touch of rap "attitude"- to emerge as one of the most respected and successful bands of their era. For quitarist Tom Morello, vocalist Zack de la Rocha, bassist Tim Cummorford (then known as Tim Bob) and drummer Brad Wilk, rock and roll was more than merely a means of expression, it was an outlet through which to vent their frustrations and expose millions to their heart-felt beliefs.

Drawing their name from a tune featured on an album recorded by de la Rocha's previous band, Inside Out, Rage Against the Machine's songs perfectly reflected their "us against them" persona. From Bulls on Parade. People of the Sun and Bullet in the Head, this unit took on anyone, anywhere, at any time... and usually emerged

"We've grown to ect members o

were never weaklings ... they ranged from the all-power-ful (at least at the time) PMRC, to the United States gov-ernment itself. At one memorable show— the 1993 Lollapalooza stop in Philadelphia— the band stood on stage naked with tape over their mouths to protest the music. But all of this controversy and conflict took its toil on the band, and less than a decade after the release of their self-titled debut disc in 1992, RATM had imploded under the weight of their own anger and ambition. De la Rocha left the group, leaving his bandmates high and dry, at least until they hooked up a year later with tormer Soudgarden vocalist Chris Cornell to form the highly

'I feel that it is now necessary to leave Rage because our decision-making process has completely failed," de la Rocha said. "It is no longer meeting the aspirations of all four of us collectively as a band, and from my perspective, has undermined our artistic and political ideal. I am extremely proud of our work, both as activists and musi-cians, as well as indebted and grateful to every person who has expressed solidarity and shared this incredible



Perhaps instead of wallowing in this band's accomplishments, however, the best way to reflect the true power of their presentation is to try and capture the aura that surrounded them at each and every one of their concert performances. We recall one particularly memorable night when **Hit Parader** shared an up-close and personal evening with Rage Against the Machine.

We can vividly remember that the crowd was in a hostile mood— and it was still more than two hours before the band was

understand us. There are a lot of people out there now who seem to at least want to understand what we're doing; that's very encouraging. We've grown to expect members of the mainstream press wanting to just call us a bunch of whiners and then move on. They don't want to waste their time dealing with a rock and roll band with a political point of view. They don't know what to make of us or how to handle us. We like that."

While de la Rocha may feel that the mainstream press didn't

have a clue regarding Rage Against The Machine's political stance, their audience had no such problems. As soon as the band took the stage, and started ripping into such potent, highly-charged songs as Freedom (which was dedicated to Native American activist Leonard Peltier) their surprise 1993 hit. Killing In The Name.

ANGRY YOUNG MEN

scheduled to take the stage. Black-leather-wearing skinheads strolled jostling anyone that dared stand in their way Tough-looking bikers stood their ground, openly smoking marijuana and taunting the near-by long-haired kids holding up a variety of politically relevant banners, ranging from "Save The Rain Forest" to the ever-popu lessly hoping against hope to find others sympathetic to their left wing causes. It was a hot steamy night, the perfect to boil over and fist fights to break out throughout they did, making security quards scurry and the police spring into action It was an almost surreal environment, a bizarre mix of '60s social activism and '90s violent

conflict, and the 10,000 gathered fans seemed intent on expressing their anger, frustration and hostility through every move they

made and every word they spoke.

Sequestered backstage in the relative serenity of their dressing room, the members of Rage Against The Machine remained somewhat oblivious to the tense situation out front. It wasn't as if this sort of conflict was new to these guys, after all they had encountered similar crowds in such distant ports of call as Rome and Rio as well as in closer-to-home locales like L.A. and San Antonio. But for Rage Against The Machine, an angry, active, aggressive crowd was almost an expected — and desired— constant. After all, the music this band presented on their platinum-selling albums remains without peer as hard rock's most politically potent and incendiary message, and the members of Rage proudly stand as the form's most potent and incendiary messengers.

"Some people want to dismiss us as just being rabble rousers," de la Rocha said. "But that attitude comes from people who don't



and their controversial MTV favorite Bulls On Parade (a trade against American military practices) the crowd was on its feet, cheering Rage on and singing along to every song. With Morello's Hendrix-inspired guitar excursions leading the way, and de ta Rocha's unique rap-come-rock vocals further inciting the assembled throng, at times it seemed the evening's proceedings were about to break into a full-scale riot. De ta Rocha, however, never had a doubt that he had the crowd under his total control.

"The thing is to keep 'em interested," he said at shows a d.

They care about important issues as much as we do. But they have their agendas and we have ours. Not every cause we support will be supported by everyone listening to us. That's okay. As long as they feel strongly about something. We want to make the people think. We want to open their eyes. We want them to know that the world is far from perfect. If we can get even a small percentage of people to get beyond the music and listen to what we're saying in our lyrics, then we're really accomplishing something."

IPSALUTES THE SURFICIE

ith the success of their latest album, 10,000 Days, Tool have done what some members of the rock community thought impossible—they've defied the normally stringent bounds of contemporary music's two most "sacred cows"... time and taste. They've done so by producing an instant chart-topping, multi-platinum disc, one that not only emerges *tour years*: after their previous effort. Lateralus, but also flies in the face of seemingly every conceivable 21st Century rock and roll convention. At a time when vacuous pop tarts and the incessant beats of Latin salsa seem to dominate the airwaves, Tool have proven what fans *really* want to hear—the dark, disturbing and eminently creepy heavy rock sounds brought forth by vocalist Maynard James Keenan, drummer Danny Carey, bassist Justin Chancellor and guitarist Adam Jones. It's a lesson the rock world had better learn all over again.

admit. Jones says that the group's influences range from folk singers like Joni Mitchell to rock pioneers like Pink Floyd (to whom, on occasion, this unit has been compared) to pedal-to-the-metal rockers like AC/DC and Metallica. But rather than borrowing directly from any of these inspirations, Tool has chosen to take snippets from each, turn those pieces inside out until their guts are showing, then cover them all in the thick, impenetrable, guitar-heavy musical morass that has become Tool's trademark. But just because the band's music on their latest album has drawn hails of praise from both the metal and alternative communities, the group wants us all to know that in their minds their music is still designed to defy both convention and easy classification.

"There's no question that the success we've had in the past was with heavier material," Jones said. "But we didn't feel limited this time; we didn't see any reason to try and duplicate what we did before. Some of our other sides have reared



"One of the distinguishing things about us is the fact that we'll *always* place our desire to enjoy what we're doing over the promise of big rewards," Jones said. "People may not believe it due to the nature of our music, but this is *fun* for us. It was great that the press and radio and MTV got behind us last time, but who know what will happen next? Quite often those same media people who love you one year turn against you the next. Who knows why? It's just a fact of life."

Despite Jones' rather up-beat appraisal of Tool's current condition, there's no denying the fact that perhaps more than anything else this L.A.-based unit enjoys making everyone who listens to their music feel just a little bit uncomfortable. Whether it's the strange, quasi-mystical design that adorns their latest album cover, or the haunting imagery that inhabits each and every one of their videos, it's impossible to deny the notion that Tool have brought a uniquely twisted musical and visual sensibility to the rock and roll universe of the 21st Century.

Yet despite all their unusual, apparently non-commercial posturings, Tool have also now shown themselves capable of appealing to the music masses with amazing dexterity. When 10,000 Days emerged as the Number One album in the music charts upon its release last spring, it caught some members of the rock world by surprise. But perhaps it shouldn't have after all each of the group's previous albums has sold more than a million units, and during their lengthy absence from the recording scene (which featured Keenan's return to his "side project", A Perfect Circle), Tool's legacy has continued to grow with metal mavens around the globe. For many bands the challenge presented by inventing a new album filled with songs even more perverse and probing than such previous noteworthy opuses as *Prison Sex* and *Sober* might have proven to be an intimidating challenge— to these slightly-off-center guys, it was simply all in a day's work.

"I don't think we really stopped to consider making a new album as any sort of daunting challenge," Jones said. "We've never approached our music from the vantage point of commercial achievement. The fact that the previous albums did well was certainly welcomed by us, but it didn't change any of our perspectives. The same, strange things that motivated us previously still motivate us now."

Somewhat ironically, for all their apparent strangeness, the roots of Tool's music are actually far more conventional than the band's members might want to

their ugly heads this time around, and I believe people will find that to be very interesting."

Apparently, those who felt they knew and understood Tool after absorbing the intricacies of such early efforts as **Undertow**. **Lateralus** and **Aenima** will still be surprised by the band's latest attempt to delve into life's dark underbelly. All the "classic" Tool elements are exposed on 10,000 Days; Keenan's cry-from-the-soul lyrics and Jones' soundscape guitar musings. But there are some startlingly different element housed in these new songs as well. From the primitive how! to the surprisingly accessible, Tool's latest album has already proven to be a true tour-de-force for this highly acclaimed West Coast quartet.

Starting out as an admittedly ugly idea in Jones' mind back in 1991, Tool represented a stark contrast from the then-traditional cars-and-girls attitudes the then dominated the So Cal rock scene. Slowly but surely the band's five shows started attracting more and more attention, with their somber lyrics and down-tuned instruments bringing a new generation of fans to the L.A. club circuit. By early 1993 the labels were starting to pay attention to Tool's musical musings, and six months later they found themselves in the recording studio laying down the tracks for **Undrtow**.

While most of the group's initial attention came from the somewhat disgusting photo imagery gracing that disc's cover, by the time MTV started pushing the band in their "buzz bin" even a blind man could have seen that Tool was headed for the big time. That fact was confirmed by the break-away success of the group's subsequent efforts, but all of that seemed to come to a grinding halt in 1998 when Tool and their record label began a heated legal battle which effectively shut down the group's career for the better part of the next four years. While the band's members busied themselves with other projects, the rock world waited, and waited for their next taste of Tool which eventually emerged as the chart-topping Lateralus fronically, it seemed that the further Tool distanced themselves from the music masses, the greater the hunger became for this unit's off-center approach. Carey admits, it was a pattern the band would repeat again prior to the release of 10,000 Days.

"We've gotten used to the idea that it's going to take us a long time between albums." he said. "Thankfully, the fans have seemingly accepted that."



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dramatically with the somber mood that seems to perpetually follow Chino Moreno around. It's not as if the Deftones' dark-haired vocalist is a particularly depressed or depressing fellow. It's just that he seems most at home when he's reveling in the gloomy, murky musical world that this Sacramento-based unit call home. As proven throughout such best-selling efforts Around the Fur, Adrenaline, White Pony, Deftones and their latest release. Saturday Night Wrist, this is a band that in any number of ways represents the ultimate in "modern" metal modes and ideals. The music made by Moreno and his bandmates—guitarist Stephen Carpenter, drummer Abe Cunningham, d.j. Frank Delgado and bassist Chi Cheng-rocks with an almost unbridled passion... and an unmitigated power. But there's also a perhaps unexpected degree of subtlety and imagination involved with the heavy rock that this band creates, a fact also proven during their recent coheadlining run at last fall's Family Values tour. We recently discussed this- and much more with the often reclusive Mr. Moreno.

Hit Parader: We heard there was a great deal of conflict within the band during the recording of your new album. Accurate?

Chino Moreno: There were definitely some moments (smiles). But there's no reason to dwell on that now—it's in the past. All I can say is that we're all very content with the process we had to go through in order to make this album. It's a bit different from what we've done before, and it's certainly different than our last album.

HP: How is Saturday Night Wrist such a different album?

Chino Moreno: It's not as dark as Deftones was, and there's more of a musical flow to the tracks. I think it's also one of the heaviest albums we've done— which is saying something. But when you get to the bottom line, the best way to describe it is by saying it's another Deftones album. I think our fans understand what that means. Hopefully by now, people expect us to try new

things and approach our music in an unconventional manner. That's exactly what we did on this one. It was a very natural album— we took a long time to write and record it, and we let each song develop fully.

HP: With each successive album, more and more people expect great things from the Deftones. How did you respond to that kind of pressure on this album?

CM: I guess we responded to it by doing our best to ignore it. Our goal from the very beginning of the writing process was to try and excite ourselves with the music we were making. We didn't want to get too comfortable with what we had become as a band. We didn't want to read the press clipping saying how great we supposedly are. We won't allow making music to become easy for us. A lot of bands probably go with their initial instinct. We don't necessarily do that. We think about it, change things up, then make our move.

HP: What was the biggest surprise for you while making this album?

CM: When you prepare for making an album the way we do, there really aren't that many surprises. Maybe for me, on a personal level, the biggest surprise was how difficult getting some of the lyrics together proved to be. I practically locked myself away for a number of weeks when most of the music had been completed to get the lyrics done. It was an exhausting process to delve that deep to examine what I wanted to express in these songs.

HP: Don't you keep notes and lyrical ideas that you can pull out when you need them?

CM: I need to be motivated by the music. We all write the music first, then let the songs come together from there. It would be practically impossible to have a stock-pile of lyrics ready to go. And I don't think that would be the best way to write our music. That sounds too much like trying to put a square peg in a round hole. The music must dictate where the lyrics go... not the other way around.

HP: On each successive album it seems as if you've turned more away from the "primal scream" philosophy and introduced more singing into the mix.

CM: That's probably true. It's hard for me to tell. I'm so

CM: That's probably true. It's hard for me to tell. I'm so close to this music, living with it on a day-to-day basis, that it's difficult to take a step back and think about it in comparison to stuff we've previously done.. But my vocals are there to reflect what the songs and the lyrics need. It's not some personal statement on my part that I've altered my approach at all.

HP: How did you get hooked up with the *Family Values* tour?

CM: We were contacted by Korn pretty early on in the process. Once they realized that Stone Sour and some other bands were going to be on the bill, I think they wanted a band like ours to kind of balance things out.

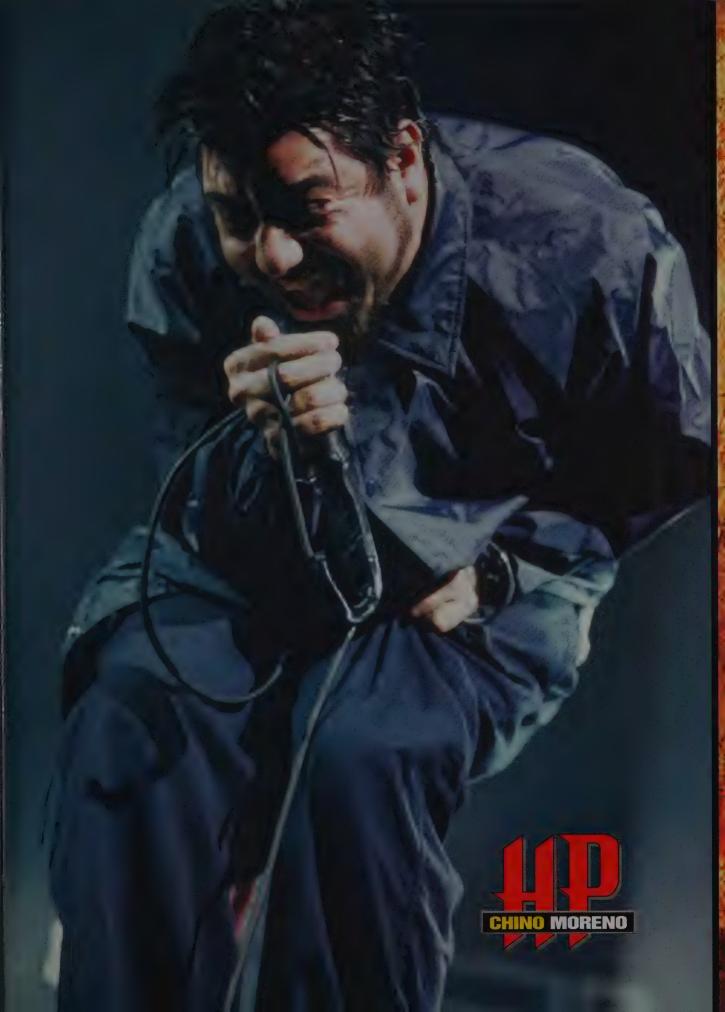
We're not as commercial as those other bands. There's still more of an "underground" vibe around us that perhaps the other groups don't have. But I do believe that Korn wanted another heavy band on the package to give the entire show a little more balance.

HP: You talked before about still being an "underground" band. How would you feel if this album sold a couple of million copies?

CM: To be honest, I wouldn't be that surprised. We've put a lot of time and effort into this album. It really is good. We've been around for a while now. We've done what needs to be done in order to get noticed. We have our following, and if this is the album that expands that following in a big way, I'd be very happy.

'By now, people expect us to try new things and approach our music in an unconventional manner."

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ven well into the 21st Century, it remains surprisingly difficult to judge the true significance that Marilyn Manson has had upon the hard rock world. Has this wild-eyed, semi-Satanic, quasi-androgynous, highly entertaining figure been merely a blip on the rock and roll radar screen, as many social historians would have us believe? Or has the heavy-handed beats and off-kilter lyrical imagery brought forth on seminal '90s albums like Smells Like Children, Antichrist Superstar and Mechanical Animals left a permanent scar on the delicate psyche of a generation? Perhaps only history itself will provide answers to such titillating questions. So instead of having us try to delve into the recesses of Manson's ever-complex personality, we figured we'd let the one and only MM speak for himself.

undefinable-something filled with wonder. It was very sexual, yet at the same time, it was also sexless. For me, it was a very vulnerable persona- I was naked to the world, which is the way almost every artist must be to create something great.

HP: Are there a lot of artists around today that you admire? MM: Yeah, there are a lot of musicians that I like. But it's not the same for me as it was when I was a fan. I mean there aren't bands today that do for me what Kiss or Black Sabbath did when I was a kid. The last band that really got to me that way was Guns 'N Roses, who I guess were the last loud, "attitude" band. Maybe Jane's Addiction is in

there too

Hit Parader: Do you think that over the years you've become something of a scapegoat for many of society's ills?

Marilyn Manson: I don't know about that. I probably bring most of the criticism I get upon myself. That's fair. I've taken the decadence and the excitement of rock and roll to a different level, and some people may have a problem with that. At one point some people even started picking on the way I dressed. They said in one newspaper review that I had started to dress like a pansy. Well, they got that wrong... I've always dressed like a pansy. HP: How would you explain the evolutionary process that's gone on

in your music over the years?

MM: Each album is different and it reflects the people I'm working with, the mood I'm in, and what I'm trying to communicate. The music means a great deal to me, but hopefully it's not just my story. I want everyone who hears it to be able to interpret it on their own level in their own way. Each album in one fashion or another, is basically my statement about how difficult it is to be a human being. When you don't fit in, and when your emotions are viewed as weakness, it's easier just to shut those emotions off. HP: Do you ever worry that you'll run out of ways to top yourself in terms of outrage?

MM: You top yourself by challenging yourself. When you become predictable, or stop being willing to push yourself, that's when you run the risk of becoming conservative. I mean there are those who say that you've got to be dead to be a great rock star. I guess in my case that's still left to be proven.

HP: Where does pure shock value fit into the Marilyn Manson

MM: I like to provoke people in order to make them think. People back in the '90s had gotten used to boring rock performers. I always believed that you can't limit yourself in anything you do. It's like the way I appeared on the cover of Mechanical Animals; why should I limit myself to being one thing? I believe I represent something

as a band that impacted me on a visceral level. Today, I admire people like Rob Zombie, who in many ways is often interpreted as doing what I do. I think he has more of a cartoon quality to his approach; there's more humor there. To my way of thinking Rob Zombie is the Alice Cooper of this era, not me.

HP: Is it a warning for you to see how a band like Kiss ended up... a rather neutered version of their former selves?

MM: Nah, I still admire them. I mean it's kind of hard for me to pick up on a band after all these years, but they certainly played a big role for me when I was a kid. They were a band that really pushed things to the limit at their time— and obviously I admire that.

HP: Your image has clearly changed over the years. How have you tried to make yourself different?

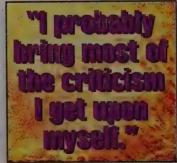
MM: I've never specifically tried to make myself more appealing. My image is something that evolves along with me. I'm not saying that some thought and planning doesn't go into it, because I enjoy doing that. But it does also have a life of its own to some extent. HP: Sales for your albums have always been somewhat hit-or-miss. Has that ever concerned

> MM: There's an attitude out there that if a record doesn't go platinum in the first week, then it's a failure. I can't go along with that. To my way of thinking, an album has been more than successful if it reaches its audience and pleases them. You've got to remember that a band like the Rolling Stones always have their albums go gold, but they

don't always go platinum. Are they a successful band? I think we could all agree on that. I don't deny that I want to be successful, but the way people look at album sales have changed. It's not the sole measure of an album's success or failure.

HP: At times in the past there have been comments that at least in terms of being an object of persecution you see a parallel between vourself and Jesus Christ. Is that still true?

MM: Jesus was the first rock star. You can't deny that his image represents death, suffering and alienation. That is very similar to the image that certain rock stars have. I'm not saying I am Jesus, or have that kind of power— but I do believe that he would certainly understand a lot of what I've gone through during my career.







t probably was the heat...it had to be the heat. What else but growing up in the intense, unforgiving 100-plus degree heat of the California desert could have explained the bizarre, netherwordly song stylings of Kyuss? That continual, oppressive heat can warp minds, and break spirits— and in the process tear the heart out of normal souls. And let's face it, these Kyuss boys were never that normal to begin with; in fact, they often appeared to live in a musical world of their own creation—a place where time and space apparently had little meaning and the only responsive sound was a heavy, guitar-laden drone that was unlike anything else the '90s hard rock world had heard.

For guitarist Josh Homme, vocalist John Garcia, bassist Scott Reeder and drummer Alfredo Hernandez, the notion that their songs emitted such an air of impenetrable mystery and atmospheric distortion only added to their short-lived mystique as one of the preeminent young, American, heavy rock bands of their era. On a series of lazy, hazy, crazy discs such as **Sky Valley, Blues For the Red Sun** and ...And The Circus Leaves Town, these Palm Desert rock rats constructed an intense, ethereal and occasionally intentionally amusing collec-

ety of hard rock and heavy metal songs. Soon they began transforming those familiar riffs into their own musical visions, injecting them with a healthy dose of desert-style mysticism and hard core rock energy. Getting gigs was understandably difficult in and around their arid homes, yet the group managed to slowly develop a reputation as an inventive and powerful new force on the hard rock scene. By 1990 they had developed a large enough following to justify scraping together a few of their own hard-earned bucks to record their debut disc, **Wretch**. That disc became an instant favorite within the metal underground, appealing equally to metal-heads, thrash merchants, space cowboys and hard core loyalists—yet major labels still looked upon Kyuss with all the sensitivity of a hungry lion eyeing its prey.

"The first few years were tough in the sense that we weren't making that much money," Homme explained. "But they were fun in that we didn't know we weren't doing well. We were having a great time playing music and just hangin' out in the desert together. It was a good life, but we began to realize that if we wanted to really get anywhere, we'd need

to push ourselves a bit more.



tion of go-for-the-throat tracks that were virtually guaranteed to leave any listener exhausted, exhilarated, entertained, and occasionally eternally confused.

"If someone listens to one of our songs and knows what it's about right away, then I don't think we've really done our jobs," Homme said back in 1996. "It's not like we've set out to confuse anyone— it's more that our songs just have a lot of different things going on within each of them. We like to write 'em so the listener has to finish the sentence we've started. There are a lot of conflicting emotions within us, and they all tend to come out at the same time. That can confuse us at times as well as anyone who listens to our music. But that's not something that particularly bothers us."

One of this band's most note-worthy qualities was always their ability to write songs that were surprisingly palatable to the rock masses— while never losing their inherent heaviness. It's a talent that Homme has expanded upon in his current (and far more famous) band, Queens of the Stone Age. But despite their best efforts, true commercial acclaim was never to be Kyuss' main calling card. After almost a decade of struggle, during which time these guys managed to survive while undergoing what would have to be labeled "tough times" by even the most pie-eyed optimist, a little commercial recognition would certainly have been a welcome relief.

"When you come from where we do, the desert, you don't always have the same kind of forces pushing you to succeed as other bands have," Homme said at the time. "You don't have a 'scene' that you're part of, and there aren't as lot of other bands to spur you on. You tend to grow at your own speed; sometimes that can be a good thing, and sometimes it isn't."

Kyuss' long struggle for recognition began back in 1987 when the band's members first started hanging out together and jamming on a vari-

That big push started in 1992 when Kyuss released their next independent album, **Blues For The Red Sun**. Rather than sitting around their homes waiting for people to call them, the band picked up on the strong, positive vibe the record was generating within the hard rock community to solicit gigs with everyone from Metallica to Danzig to White Zombie. It was at one of these gigs that someone at Elektra Entertainment (Metallica's label at the time) noticed the band and offered them a modest recording contract. Needless to say, Kyuss jumped at the opportunity and soon had entered the studio to record their major label debut, **Sky Valley**— a four part "concept" album that further cemented the group's rep as one of the most intriguing bands around.

"We never felt any particular pressure to sign with a major label," Homme said. "We just kind'a figured that if and when the time was right it would happen. It was never our ambition to be part of that scene. We've tried to enjoy ourselves whether we've been making album for small labels and basically booking our own tours, or recording for one of the biggest labels in the world."

Despite the fact that they never attained the kind of success they perhaps deserved, Kyuss left a major mark on the heavy music world, laying the foundation for the "stoner rock" movement that has since spawned everyone from Fu Manchu to Wolfmother. Throughout it all, the members of Kyuss remained intent on retaining their "down home" attitudes towards the music industry. This was one band that was clearly intent on doing things their own way.

"We're not sure exactly where we're goin', but that's half the fun," Homme said in '97. "We're just kind'a sitting back and enjoying the ride at

the moment. It's a real fun trip.



DON'T FORGET 'EM

SPONGE: One of the decade's best Detroit rockers.

UGLY KID JOE: Had a series of hit albums... and produced some top-notch talent.

SILVERTIDE: Nirvana in pajamas... from Australia.

> STATIC X: We always admired Wayne's hair.

ALL PHOTOS: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

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t could be argued that at the peak of their late '90s power no band on Planet Earth could hold a candle to Pantera in terms of sheer, unadulterated rock and roll power. Not Metallica, who on varying occasions seemed overly content to wallow in pseudo-pop pretense or enjoy fiddling with orchestras... not Slayer, who despite their satanic intent too often were absent from the heavy metal scene... not Sabbath, who even with the return of Ozzy were merely a shadow of their former selves. Oh sure, such a notion is virtually guaranteed to generate a spate of backroom discussions and barroom brawls. But the simple fact of the matter is that when they decided to crank their metallic machine into high gear nobody could match the vitriolic sounds created by guitarist Dimebag Darrell, vocalist Philip Anselmo, drummer Vinnie Paul and bassist Rex Brown. On a string of albums like Cowboys From Hell and Vulgar Display of Power, timeand-time again these Texas-based rockers showed that they were America's kick-ass rock and roll champions.

For Pantera much of their acclaim revolved around their internal chemistry... as well as, on occasion, their marked lack of that said-same commodity. This was, to say the least, a highly combustible crew. In Dime they had one of the supreme fret masters of his generation, a guy who grew up ingesting the best that Frehley, Page and Van Halen had to offer, and then later spewing all of that back upon us with his own hell-bent perspectives thrown in for good measure. In Anselmo they presented a demonic frontman who despite his occasionally unpredictable predilections could rouse a crowd's internal "monster" before he even broke a sweat. And in Vinnie they possessed an ever-smiling rhythm machine who seemed to serve as the glue that managed to keep this band's explosive ingredients from imploding at the wrong time

or in the wrong place

"We made some pretty good music, didn't we," Vinnie said. "There were times when I really believed that there wasn't another band around that could touch us. Maybe I

was prejudiced, but that's honestly the way I felt. When we had it cook-

ing, it all just came together. It was an amazing feeling.

Alas, as we all know, that amazing feeling was not destined to last forever. By the early part of this decade, it seemed as if the various bonds that loosely held the Pantera crew together had begun to come apart at the seams. Anselmo, after pledging his loyalty to the band, decided to go off and record with side projects like Down and Superjoint Ritual rather than spend time in the studio the Dime and Vinnie. Then heated words started to roar from both camps, making accusations that quickly led everyone down a precipitous slope from which their was no return. Just like that, Pantera was done, with Dime and Vinnie going off to luanch their ill-fated Damageplan, and Anselmo left to battle his own demons.

"It's still hard to understand," Vinnie said. "Phil just started saying some really nasty stuff about us in the press, and I don't know if I'll ever understand why. He had told us that he just didn't feel like making music at that time, and the next thing we know he's off in the studio with a couple of other bands. We felt like we had been lied to big-time. And then when the words started, that was it. We had no choice.

Despite their nasty and very public breakup, many fans belied that it would only be a matter of time before cooler heads prevailed and the members of Pantera would once again unite their rock and roll forces Sure, everyone could go off and do their own thing for a while, but in two years... or three... or five... the "need" to again make Pantera music would draw everyone back to the source like the proverbial moth to flame. It was never to be. On the night of December 8, 2004 that dream came to a crashing, mind-numbingly tragic end when Dime was shot and



everyone," said a noted radio personality. "Dime and Vinnie were really enjoying themselves with Damageplan, and I think they always believed that at some point in the future they'd get it together again with Phil. Perhaps the only good thing that can be said of it all is

that Dime went out the way he would have wanted-on stage, with his boots on, guitar in hand.

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Before we write the epitaph for this pounding foursome, however, let's all hearken back to a happier time in the mid '90s, a time when Pantera was rippin' it up on the road, and leaving a swath of metallic destruction in their wake. They were young... they were hungry... they were at the peak of their power. It seems like it was only last month, but it was actually almost ten years ago when we last visited these Texas rock-

ers on the tour trail, and quite a time was had by all.

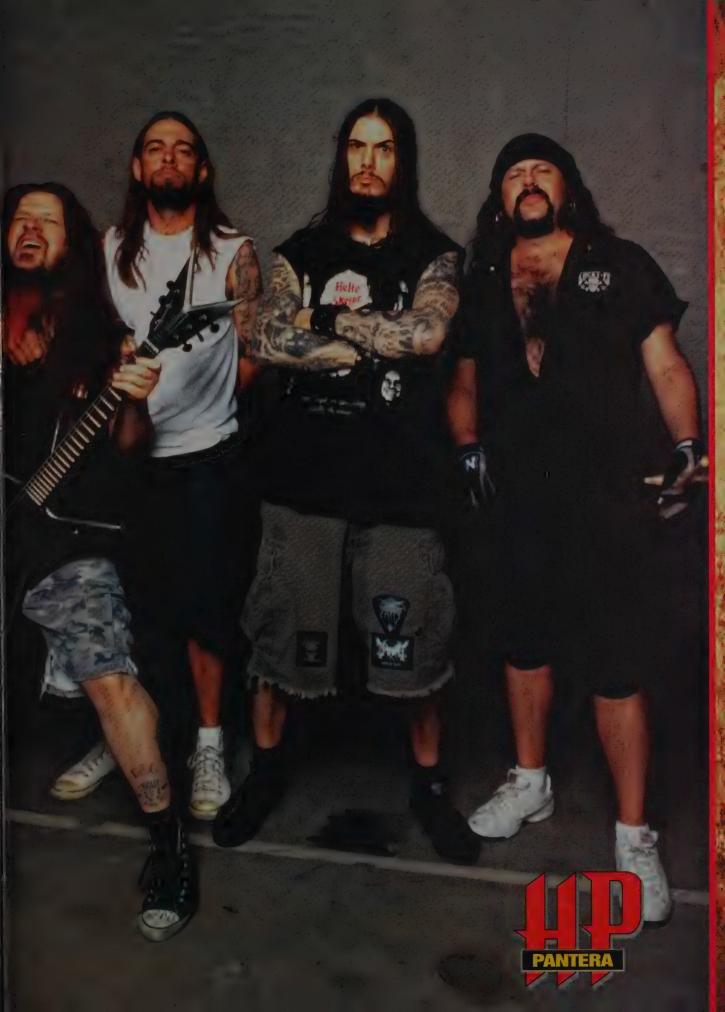
We recall that it was an hour before showtime, and Dimebag and Vinnie Paul were standing in the crowded basement of a face-

less Midwestern arena talking with a group of local radio contest winners. As the assembled throng of perhaps a dozen invited guests shifted nervously from foot to foot as they waited to ask the pair of rockers their various questions, Pantera's guitarist and drummer seemed totally at ease. It was obvious they were loving the attention being showered upon them, as well as the chance to just hang out with some of their ardent supporters. When posters and photos were shoved under their noses, they signed 'em with a smile, and when they were asked "How loud do you play?" for the tenth time that evening, they did their best to answer as politely as possible.

Even after nearly 15 years atop the metal meat-grinder, it was abundantly clear that Pantera remained totally infatuated with every aspect of their rock and roll craft. As they toured the nation that summer, they rested comfortably with the knowledge that they were sitting at the very top of their game. With the success of their then-current disc, Reinventing The Steel. Pantera had proven that they could go one-on-one with any members of the metal army... and emerge victorious. And with the sell-out status of their arena tour, these riff-loving rockers had shown that they still had what it took to attract thousands-upon-thousands of devot-

ed fans to their shows each and every night.

"You know, it's impossible to ever get tired of this," Dime said as he began walking back to the band's pre-show dressing area. "I love the smell of arenas. I love the action that goes on before a show. And, of course, I love it most of all when those lights down and the music starts. Man, no matter how I may be feeling during the day—tired, a little hung over or just not feeling that good - when the action starts all that's forgotten. For the next two hours, I'm on top of the world."





oving from the "underground" to the "overground" is never easy. It's a bumpy, dangerous trip few bands dare to make—and even fewer survive. The rock history book is littered with the corpses of "underground" sensations that never quite made the transition to major label acceptance. It seems as though once you've established your unconventional perceptions, and your non-commercial attitudes, it's darn near impossible to shift those musical reactants around to meet the needs of a more expansive fan base... unless, of course, that fan base happens to shift

around to meet you!

Many would argue that such was the case with White Zombie, a band so unconventional, so unique, so out-there, that it was long believed that they would live out their entire musical careers on the outside looking in. For seven frustrating years, starting with the group's formation in late 1984, the band struggled to break out of the restrictive grasp of the legendary New York "downtown" scene. It indeed seemed as if Rob Zombie and his cohorts would never get a solid shot at grabbing hold of rock's soft commercial underbelly. They released critically acclaimed but commercially non-existent discs like 1987's Soul Crusher and 1989's Make Them Die Slowly that did little to convince anyone that these Zombies would ever be more than rock and roll paris

ahs. But then, unexpectedly, things started to change.

Almost as soon as Nirvana's anthemic *Smells Like Teen Spirit* began serving as the clarion call to a generation that ushered in alternative rock's '90s commercial renaissance, Rob Zombie sensed that the time to make The Big Move had arrived. It didn't hit him all at once, but gradually— especially after his unit had relocated in the perpetually sunny climes of Los Angeles— he began to understand that something drastic had occurred within the hard rock world. The kings of Poseur Metal, who had dominated the charts, the airwaves and the print media throughout the '80s, had gone the way of the dinosaur, and with their sudden passing a new niche had opened up for hard-edged bands that didn't mousse their hair or wear matching leather jackets. With the help of the ever-savvy folks at Geffen Records— a label that just-so-happened to sense these musical changes at about the same time as Rob— White Zombie soon

"We didn't change, the whole musical atmosphere did."

found themselves leading alternative hard rock's charge up the commercial mountain.

"What you've got to realize is that we didn't change, the whole musical atmosphere did," Rob explained. "If you go back and listen to our earlier albums, and then listen to the things we did after that, there really isn't that big a difference. But what was once viewed as uncommercial, if not totally unlistenable, suddenly became what everyone wanted to hear. Believe me, I was as surprised as anyone."

While his initial reaction may have been one of surprise, Rob quickly managed to adapt to his newly found notoriety. It mattered little (at least Rob says it mattered little) that much of White Zombie's initial acclaim came via the unexpected support of MTV's dynamic duo of dweebs, Beavis & Butthead who gave their verbal thumb's up to such La

Sexorcisto videos as *Thunderkiss 65*. But it soon became apparent that White Zombie was more than

some counterculture kitsch band— a group that depended on their outrageous appearance and netherwordly sound for acceptance— these guys were unquestionably the *real thing*. Coming across as a bastardized step-child of Kiss and the Ramones, with a little Alice Cooper thrown in for good measure, White Zombie filled a gaping void in the rock world by providing not only high-profile theatrics but also a highly digestible brand of metallic rock.

"Even after we signed with Geffen, we kept our do-it-yourself attitude," Rob explained. "We saw it all before with the first wave of bands from the New York scene who got signed by major labels. They all started to act like big stars—but six months later they were back in the neighborhood working in the pizza shop. We all knew that just getting on a major didn't mean anything if we all didn't keep working at pushing the band along. We felt we had something to offer—but we had always felt that way. We didn't think we were for everybody, but our music wasn't just designed to be appreciated by three kids in Brooklyn.

Well, maybe White Zombie's music was designed to be appreciated by three million kids in Brooklyn— or at least an equal number of supporters in the surrounding Continental U.S. Indeed, La Sexorcisto did sell that many copies, priming the pump for the eventual release of Astro Creep:2000 in 1995. As if just to prove that their previous success was no fluke, that disc proceeded to sell over a million copies within the first two months of availability, and eventually reached the lofty triple platinum sales figure attained by its illustrious predecessor. But that kind of sales consistency proved to be only part of the ever-unpredictable White Zombie mystique. Amazingly, in that era of everchanging rock faces, a time when trends came and went with the blink of an eye, Rob Zombie and his cohoris— bassist Sean Yseault, guitarist J. Younger and drummer John Tempesta— became the somewhat unwitting voice of "traditional hard rock." To a '90s generation weaned on Grunge and Green Day, White Zombie's sound harked back to an earlier, heavier era of rock stylings.

White Zombie's sound harked back to an earlier, heavier era of rock stylings. "We never fit in with that generation of bands," Rob said. "But we didn't really fit in with the older generation either. I don't know exactly where we fit in—and that's fine with me. We were never part of the corporate rock thing, like Guns N Roses or Whitesnake—both of whom were on our record label. But we were never a bunch of punks either."

Before one gets the idea, however, that White Zombie was nothing more than Rob's personal play toy, let it be said loudly and clearly that prior to their breakup in 1999 (which signaled the start of Rob's solo career) this was very much a band. Back then, Mr. Z was very quick to point out that each of the group's musical creations was the byproduct of four keen musical minds. But with that point clarified, Rob was never shy about saying that among four equals, he happened to be a little more equal.

"I never liked it when it was assumed that I wrote everything and controlled everything," he said. "It happened that we wrote most of the songs together, and we discussed what we were going to do as four people. But when we got things done at the end of the day, someone had to step forward and make the tough decisions. I guess that was my job."



CHP SALUTES THE SQUEETS

throughout their cavernous backstage dressing area located deep in the bowels of an East Coast arena. Music was blaring... loudly. Good natured taunts, jeers and jibes were flying back and forth. It was near the end of the band's historic *Subliminal Verses Tour* road jaunt, and d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Grey, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor (a.k.a. 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) were in high spirits. Despite the fact that Crahan had been forced to miss a number of shows due to an illness in his family, now that they were reunited, this Nine Man Mutant Metal Army acted like they didn't have a care in the world.

"We're strongest when we're all together," Grey said. "We've always been able to draw strength from one another, and sometimes on the road that's exactly what you need to do. This tour has been one of the highlights of our lives, and I think we've grown to appreciate how much all of this means to us."

As they impatiently awaited to go on stage, these now-leg-endary masked rock-ers from Des Moines, lowa couldn't hide the satisfaction they derived from their myriad recent accomplishments. Despite being near exhaustion from the

ments. Despite being hear exhaustion from the non-stop rigors of the road, they knew that they had once again beaten the odds (and critical scorn) to emerge as one of metal's primal forces. Their latest album, **Vol. 3: The Suhliminal Verses**, had become a platinum-selling hit. Their videos for songs like *Duality and Vermillion* had emerged as award-winning smashes. And their tour treks—ranging from runs as Jagermeister and Ozzfest headliners to 2005's arena-packing Subliminal Verses road jaunt—had solidified this unit's reputation as one of the most dynamic and unpredictable, bands in hard rock history.

dynamic, and unpredictable, bands in hard rock history.

"When yo' look back over the last couple of your it's be not always and this album—with a lot of your think back to when a we sared for which has been with a lot of your purpose questioning us, a drur on commitment to the band—and realize where we are now it's kind of incredible. But we always sensed that it would happen like this. We've always been very confident in our own abilities."

Come to think of it, why wouldn't the Knot be totally confident in their ability to continually "wow" the metal community? After all, their previous two discs, 2000's **Slipknot** and 2002's **lowa** each soid over a million copies while establishing this mask-wearing, coverall-bearing unit as metal's premier shock rock proponent. An iono are year-long break when the band, ambers tackled a variety of outside property rumors were rum ant the Volta would represent the Knot's swan song. If any 'd bury the cheek look a would reven get the disc completed! But complete it they did, and over the subsequent months, as they traversed the highways and byways of Mother Earth, these nine crazed rockers grew closer than ever before, drawn together by one basic understanding— that without each other the Knot would cease to exist.

understanding—that without each other the Knot would cease to exist.

"It's all of us or none of us," Taylor said. "We had to play a few shows in Europe last summer when one of us was sick with a bad tooth, and then Clown missed a few shows because of some health problems at home. When

even one of us isn't there, it's so different. There's a gaping void. We've grown to understand that we're totally dependent on each other to make Slipknot work, and no matter what else we may do in our lives, we want and we *need* the Knot to keep going."

And "keep going" they have, much to the delight of the million fans around the globe who witnessed the band on their various recent tour runs. But what is it that makes thousands-upon-thousands of fans on a nightly basis seem willing to sell their proverbial souls in order to attend a Slipknot show? Perhaps the answer to that query is akin to understanding the crux of life itself. After all, going to a Slipknot concert is quite unlike anything else known to mortal man. Rather than being directly linked to other music-

oriented events, a
Knot show bears a
striking resemblance
to stepping into an
alien hive— a place
where a collective
consciousness seems
to both pervade and
control the proceedings. To those in-theknow— which thankfully appears to be a
vast majority of those
in attendance— this
decidedly different
ambiance seems to be

embraced like a long-lost love. But for those perhaps not fully initiated into the severity and intensity of the Slipknot rock and roll experience, encountering the masked, uniformed images of these nine rockers, as well as confronting the incredibly intense sound barrage they create, is a situation clearly not designed for the faint-of-heart.

clearly not designed for the faint-of-heart.

"When wa go on stage, the goal is to create an environment of total chaos," Taylor said shortly before beginning the show. "It's a feeling that the number of the band create," and at the same time in links us an any with everyone of the crowd. It is a transcription of the crowd of t

that's the atmosphere we want to create."

By the end, their must recent tour (which, it remers are to be believed, marks the last time we may see this unit on the road until 2008!) creating that chaotic ambiance seemed almost second nature to this Midwestern metal unit. Drawing evenly from their three albums, Slipknot, lowa, and Vol. 3, this Mine Man Mutant Metal Army proceeded to put on a nearly two-hourlong stage spectacular that was a non stop feast for both the eyes and ears. Part ritualistic celebration, part wall-of-sound spectacle, part pure sharmaninspired mannary in ania, in shot managed to convey them a idedly off-center ideals in mannary into go while never sample one iota of their uspectation of the convey the stage of the convey the sample of the s

"We love it when someone who might not know what to expect comes to one of our shows," Taylor said. "We've heard some of the stories about them running out of the theaters— or being carried out."



EPSALUTES THE SOURS

hey may forever be linked with the Hair Metal movement or the '80s as the ultimate purveyors of that era's heavily-tattooed, party-hearty, live fast and die young philosophy. But the fact is that Guns N' Roses were also very much a band of the '90s. As the culmination— both figuratively and literally— of everything that the previous decade's hard rock movement stood for, vocalist Axl Rose, guitarists Slash and Izzy Stradlin, bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Steven Adler rocked the music world to its very core, almost destroying themselves in the process.

The fact of the matter is that Guns N' Roses were never particularly comfortable with the notion of merely existing on the rock and roll scene. It was their intent to hit the music world like a run-away freight train, an uncontrollable force ready, willing and able to blast asunder everything—and everyone—unlucky enough to be standing in their path of destruction. For these guys rock and roll wasn't a musical form as much as it was a lifestyle, a statement of purpose consisting equally of all-night parties, bloody street brawls and an endless stream of wine, women and song. At a time when the rock universe was growing almost jaded with the wild-man, fun-seeking rockers who seemed to comprise the entirety of the Los Angeles music orb, Guns N' Roses proved that those other guys had only been pretenders, that *they* were the only true contenders for the title of hard rock's most dangerous band.

'outrageous' stories were actually a lot milder than what was really going on. We were having a great time for ourselves, though maybe it did get outof-hand occasionally."

The stories concerning Guns N' Roses quickly became the stuff of legend; the tales of Slash passing out in the Rainbow after suffering a near-fatal drug overdose, of Axl having verbal and physical confrontations with *everyone*, of Adler being so out-of-it that he could hardly perform at many of the band's shows, of Stradlin growing so sick and tired of the circus that was GN'R that he threatened to quit on a daily basis. But through it all, the band's popularity continued to grow. Songs like *Mr. Brownstone* and *Paradise City* detailed their wild lifestyle while soaring to the top of the charts. By the time it was through, **Appetite For Destruction** had sold over ten million copies, making it one of the most successful debut efforts in rock history.

Of course, following up such a massive success is never easy, and the Top Gunners labored over their next effort, the two-disc set, **Use You Illusion**, for the better part of two years. Once again the album was controversial from the moment of it's release; not for it's cover art this time, rather for the fact that the band chose to sell the two disc's separately—doubling their sales potential in the process. While the group insisted that they made the move "for the good of their fans", cries of "rip off" could be heard far-and-wide.

"IT WAS NEVER AN ACT... WE WERE WHAT WE WERE."

"It was never an act, we were what we were," Slash explained. "We were jus a bunch of guys who were used to living on the streets, getting by on our wits. We brought all of that with us when we started to make it. We were a product of our society. Some of the other bands around at the moment had started to look and act a certain way because they thought it was their ticket to success. We hated them, and they hated us— basically because they knew we were real."

From the moment their debut album, **Appetite For Destruction**, was released upon a somewhat unwitting public in the summer of 1987, GN'R discovered themselves embroiled hip-deep in controversy. With the disc's original cover sporting a cartoon scene depicting a woman apparently being beaten and raped, the band instantly found themselves the targets of conservative action groups out to eradicate the "evils" of heavy metal from American society. Oh, but if those women's groups only knew that the album's cover was only the tip of the debauchery iceberg for these guys, they may have given up their battle right there and then. While the band did finally agree to allow their label to change the cover, the new one depicted each of the group member's trademark hair styles perched atop a skull—and those skulls were lined up inside of a cross.

Within six months of **Appetite's** release (after a surprisingly slow sales start) Guns N' Roses were poised on the brink of becoming the most popular band on earth. Their debut single, *Welcome To The Jungle*, had become an international anthem of teen rebellion, and the band's live shows were being hailed far and wide for both their energy and their high degree of musical proficiency. The guitar rags had started touting Slash as one of the most inventive new players to come on the scene in years, and the fanzines were giving Axl the cover-boy treatment— much to his press-hating chagrin. But despite all the attention, and all their positive reviews, all it seemed that anyone *really* wanted to talk about was the "wild side" of Guns N' Roses.

"It got to be really silly," McKagan said. "We were doing some pretty wild things, but the press made up other stuff. The funny part was that the

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"We figured that instead of putting out a double album, where the price would be really high, we'd just put out the two discs separately, so that the price of each would be more reasonable," Slash stated. "I didn't really hear that many people complain."

The long, often rambling **Illusion** set proved to be a massive success, but failed to convince cynics that the band's best days weren't already behind them. The always tempestuous Rose had already fired Adler, while Stradlin—one of the band's stabilizing forces—had quit, and rumors persisted that Rose and Slash weren't getting along. While the group's next tour proved to be the year's most lucrative road package, massive cracks in the GN'R rock machine could be seen, and for many watching the band on stage became akin to viewing an auto race—they were just waiting for the big crash to happen. Well, instead of going out with a massive bang, throughout the '90s it seemed as if these one-time Top Gunners had disappeared from the scene with little more than a whimper. The always delicate Slash/Axl relationship finally came completely asunder in 1997, leaving many of the band's supporters to wonder if this one-time hit-making machine could ever get themselves back on track. By the late '90s, even the ever-reliable Duff has turned his back on the band, and it seemed that the notorious Axl would have to forge on with none of his former compatriots in tow.

Despite the shattering of the group's original "brotherhood" — as well as the never-ending wait for Axi's new disc, **Chinese Democracy**— over the last decade interest in Guns N' Roses has remained amazingly high. The major question, of course, is whether anyone will still care about this music with the same degree of passion that characterized the band's original historic stand. But that should never detract from the fact that Axl Rose, perhaps the ultimate rock and roll rebel, has managed to survive and prosper against all who predicted his demise. He's lived the lifestyle he chose— and he lived to tell about it. Perhaps that more than anything else will serve as the ultimate epitaph of the band forever known as Guns N' Roses.

THE MEN... THE MYTH CUSTS



KE 'EM SERIOUSLY!

ven before the appearance of their recent CD/DVD collection, Greatest Hitz a lot of fans were wondering about the future of Limp Bizkit Could this one-time chart-topping rap/metal unit, perhaps one of the key-note hard rock bands of the '90s, stay together long enough to prove their worth to the 21st Century rock world? Even main man Fred Durst

seemed confused by what people were saying in and around his group.

I kept hearing stuff," he said. "It was weird stuff... the kind of stuff that I knew wasn't true. People were saying that we were breaking up, and that just wasn't where it was at. We're together and we're focused on what's gonna hap-

It's easy to understand why fans in recent years have looked somewhat askance at Limp Bizkit. Things just haven't been the same within this platinum selling unit ever since guitarist Wes Borland briefly bolted the fold back in 2002 Almost immediately, rumors began to run rampant that the mercurial axe masser would soon return to the unit (featuring vocalist Durst along with turntable master DJ Lethal, drummer John Otto and bassist Sam Rivers) with whom he had recorded such chart-topping efforts in the late '90s as Three Dollar Bill, Y'all and Significant Other. But it wasn't until the summer of '04- and both the low-profile status of Borland's career and the disappointing response afforded LB's non-Borland disc, Results May Vary—that things began to truly heat up on the Borland/Bizkit "reunion" front

It was natural that they come back together," said an on-the-scene source There had been a few problems, but nothing that couldn't be worked out. Fred always said that Wes was vital to Limp Bizkit, and Wes realized that he missed the guys and the music that Limp Bizkit was making. It was a logical move for

Not only is Limp Bizkit trying to recapture their fast-diminishing commercial "lightning" by once-again joining forces with Borland, they're calling in the production "troops" to aid in their cause. Indeed, this trend-setting rap/metal unit has returned to their original producer, Ross Robinson (best known for his work with Korn and Slipknot), to helm their next studio opus— a disc now scheduled to appear sometime in 2007. While some may view such moves as nothing less than total capitulation by the LB brigade in regard to their current non-impact role in the rock and roll world, others will note that Durst rarely misses the apportunity to either promote himself or do the right thing in terms of giving his band their best chance for success

lost some momentum," the tattooed vocalist said. "Let's try to put all of that in a little perspective. We've now put out five albums, and we've sold over 30 million copies around the world. That's not too bad. I can think of at least a few other bands that might be willing to change way it is. I don't view that as a commentary on its quality.

Despite the returns of Borland and Robinson, there's mide doubt that these heavy-hop masters still have their detractors. Those nay-savers will clearly state that the period when the LB brigade most impacted the hard rock anyone that has followed the contemporary music scene

be one of the true rarities of the rock and roll world-a band that can seeming-

ly defy the odds by delivering the goods disc after disc.
Time and again, the Bizkit brood have shown that they can rock with the best of 'em-- and, in the process, stay one solid step ahead of the competition. Their unique ability to take the most blatant—and accessible—elements of metal, hip-hop and pop, and mold them into a sound that urban rockers in Detroit and metal-heads in So Cal can grab hold of with equal aplomb, has reade Limp Bishirt the ultimate rock and roll melting pot. And while some might and of the such a diverse style has already evolved past the nookie-oriented antics presented by Durst and his crew, few would bet against this band once again exerting their might upon the often staid confines of the rock and roll world in '07

"We have a vibe that we try to create on every record we do," Durst said.
"It's our way of just letting loose with what we feel inside. We're not trying to wilve experienced and everything that's gone on and dealing with it the best

With their names back in the news to some extent thanks to their "hits" nes if world treem is if time Bizkit have had a lot to "deal with" over the tist few months. But considering the band members' often sordid past (which included Durst's off-discussed pre-Bizkit stint in jail), all the vibes that have recently surrounded LB have had a decidedly up-beat impact on the music they've been preparing for their next disc. While some of the band's past efforts rese marked by merrial flustration or analyzing the myriad foibles of standom. . Durst morning that their next effort will present this band in full control of both their emotions and their music. Rather than making the group seem "grown up to 14th huwaver, this degree of control will most likely add even more

power and substance to their high-energy sound.
"All we've ever tried to do, whether it's in the studio, on stage or in our personal lives, is give back something to the people who've gotten us here," Durst said. "We feel that we owe them. We don't want to pull that Rock Star stuff of

making people wait four years to hear new music

The funny thing is that when the Bizkit boys did decide to take years and years between their releases. Durst always had plenty of activities to keep himself busy. Already considered one of music's leading entrepreneurs due to his

on-going role as a major A&R force (he discovered the likes of Staind and Puddle of Mudd), Durst's private activities have also drawn their share of attention. By very publicly discussing his supposed liaisons with stars ranging from Britney Spears to Halle Berry, Durst has become infamous in many pop culture circles, Indeed, he ranks as one of the few recent rock celebrities who has made

You know... I've never been shy about discussing something of a romantic. Hike being with people who I care about and who I think care about me. Sometimes it doesn't work out the way I might have liked, but my

can think ui a iew other bands to change

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hey helped establish the "heavy hop" sound. They proved that a band could present a strong religious message to a hard rock crowd without coming across as "preachy." They've gone to hell and back countless times, losing friends to the "mean streets" and even having their familial ambiance broken asunder in 2003 when guitarist Carlos split the scene. But through it all, P.O.D. has survived and prospered, emerging as not only one of the seminal bands of the last decade, but also as a unit that continues to blaze their own path through the rock and roll hinterlands. But as Hit Parader examines their current state-of-affairs- which features the success of their latest disc, **Testify** as well as a career spanning **Greatest Hits** retrospective— our minds roll back to a simpler, perhaps happier time for the gentlemen known collectively as Payable On Death.

It was a late summer's day back in 2001, and Sonny, Wuy, Traa and Carlos were lounging in the warm late afternoon sun outside of their Los Angeles recording studio. Work on their then new album, Satellite, had nearly been completed and the members of P.O.D. were fully enjoying this all-to-brief respite from the dark confines of the studio. After nearly two solid years of recording, touring, writing and then recording again, this San Diego-based unit was in need of a little break, and even a few stolen minutes from the grind of recording was enough to put king-sized smiles on the faces of this tattooed quartet.

"Man, it's just nice to see some daylight," Sonny said with a laugh as he lowered himself into a deck chair. "You get caught up in making an album, and sometimes you forget what time it is, what day it is, and even where you are. Except for the weekend, where we always put time aside for our families, being in a band can be kind of a nonstop blur."

Since they had first burst forth upon the international hard rock scene in 1999 with the release of their major label debut, The Fundamental Elements of Southtown, P.O.D. had maintained one of the busiest agendas around. With that album selling more than a million copies, subsequent demand for the group's in-concert services had carried them around the globe, in the process bringing P.O.D.'s heavy-yet-positive message of love, hope and rock and roll to every corner of Planet Earth. They'd seen their faces adorn countless magazine features and their videos dominate MTV broadcasts. But these still very down-to-earth musicians had taken all their success in stride. And as Satellite soon began to shoot up the sales charts eventually selling more than four million copies and spawning hits like Boom, they remained the same committed, contented crew that they were before all this rock and roll craziness threatened to turn their lives upside down.

One of the big advantages we've had is that we've been together in this band for a long time," Sonny explained. "If everything that happened to us with Southtown had happened ten years ago, I don't

know how we might have reacted. But we're not a bunch of kids anymore. We've been around. We put out two albums on our own before we ever signed a big contract. We were ready for what happened to us—at least as ready as any band can ever be.

Ready or not, it seemed as if everything that P.O.D. had previously experienced throughout their career had been geared expressly towards preparing them for the response afforded Satellite. With the disc's break-out single, Alive, garnering massive amounts of airplay, and the controversial track Youth of the Nation drawing plaudits from concerned citizens across the land, it seemed like this band was on the fast track towards increasing their high-profile status.

"In the past, we've made albums for a ridiculously low amount of money," Sonny said. "So having some money to work with, and a lot of great people behind us, made this whole recording process really easy. It was left up to us to create the album we wanted to make, and there were so many different ideas running through our heads that they all kind of burst out of us."

"Almost everything we see and do has some kind of impact on us," he added. "It can be just hanging out with our families, or it can be a major event that makes the news. That's what happened with Youth of the Nation. Just as we were writing for this album the school shooting in Santee, California took place—that's only about two miles from where we all live. That really hit home with us. We knew we had to speak out in one of our songs and discuss that situation. The song has gotten a lot of positive response, and that's been very gratifying to us."

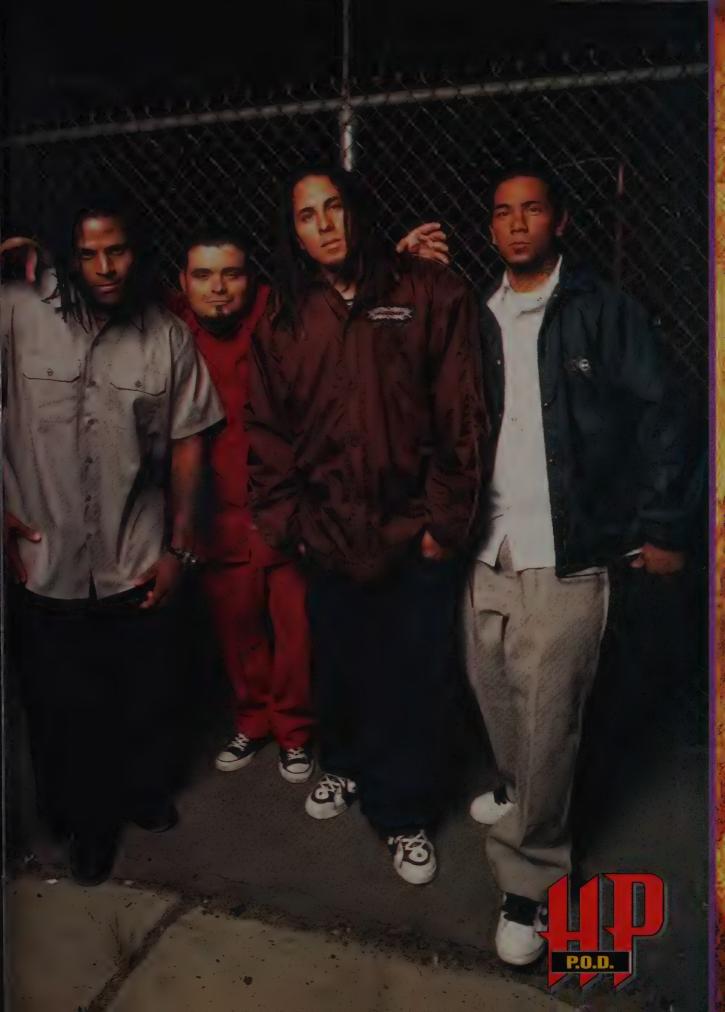
Not only did Youth of the Nation draw a strong response from an ock starved masses, it also seemed as if the entirety of Satellite garnered rave reviews from all who experienced its powerful riffs and to the edge off their music in order to make sure that their message reached as many ears of possible, on that disc P.O.D. made sure 10 create their heaviest, most potent album.

"Our manager told us that i

their minds work."

Making everyone wonder and use their minds seems to rest at the very crux of P.O.D.'s musical philosophies. But thankfully, no matter how poignant their message might be, these guys have never assumed the preachy, arrogant stance that has been the downfall of so many recent rock performers. With P.O.D. what you see is what you get— musical "brothers" from the Mean Streets of So Cal, guys who have learned life's harsh lessons the hard way and are now out to communicate what knowledge they've garnered to anyone wise

of our thoughts down your throat. You can get into what we're say ing if you want, or you can just sit back and get into the music. It designed to be a release for your mind, for your body and for your soul."





he 21st Century may only be eight years old, but during that time the hard rock form has enjoyed one of its greatest periods of commercial and artistic growth. From the shock rock antics of Slipknot and Mudvayne, to the "supergroup" efforts of Audioslave and Velvet Revolver, to the "pure" metal stompings of Mastodon and Lamb of God, to the "next wave" efforts of Avenged Sevenfold and Trivum, to the cutting edge presentations of System of a Down and Killswitch Engage, it has been a time filled with some of the most surprising and satisfying music in hard rock's glorious history. While some longtime observers of the contemporary music scene continue to state that there hasn't been anything new in hard rock since the halcyon days of Zeppelin and Sabbath in the '70s, today's metal fans know differently. They're well aware that we're living in the midst of one of the most exciting eras in the annals of hard rock! Here's a quick look at some of this decade's break-out stars.



LACUNA COIL: This Italian unit led by the beautiful Christina Scabbia, has brought a classical influence into contemporary metal.



BLACK TIDE: These teen-aged rockers from Miami have drawn on the influence of everyone from Metallica to Iron Maiden on their debut disc, Light From Above.

MUDVAYNE: After stripping off their trademark



MASTODON: Atlanta-based metal merchants who have created "epic" metal opuses.

makeup, this one-time shock rock unit has proven to be one of this decade's most intelligent and successful bands.



BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE: Leading the latest British metal charge, this quartet blends classic metal influences with a new-age attitude.





HATEBREED: A band that reflects the attitudes, fears and disappointments of their large following.



WOLFMOTHER: Hippy, trippy hard rockers from Australia who blended AC/DC-styled riffs with T. Rex-influenced lyrics on their debut disc.



AVENGED SEVENFOLD: Orange County rockers have won over a legion of fans-- while simultaneously alienating an equally large number of hard rock aficionados.



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